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## European strategies in lifelong learning. A critical introduction

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Study Guides  
in Adult Education

Licínio C. Lima  
Paula Guimarães

# European Strategies in Lifelong Learning

A Critical Introduction

Barbara Budrich Publishers



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# Study Guides in Adult Education

edited by

Regina Egetenmeyer



Licínio C. Lima  
Paula Guimarães

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## Preface

*Lifelong learning* is a term that goes back to various concepts of lifelong education. In the 1970s, these concepts were developed by international organisations, most notably the Council of Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They all published their educational policies on lifelong learning in the first half of the 1970s. The Council of Europe (1971) developed a concept called *education permanente*, which referred to a flexible system of learning modules. UNESCO, with its concept of *lifelong education* (Faure et. al., 1972), focused on the development of a learning society based on democratic and human values. Emphasising personal abilities and attitudes, this concept called for a global right to learning. By contrast, the OECD (1973), in line with its goals, proposed the concept of *recurrent education*, which pursued economic goals, suggesting that individuals alternate between periods of education and gainful employment.

Since the 1990s, these concepts have evolved from *education* to *learning*. UNESCO (Delors et. al., 1997), OECD (1996), and the European Union (2000) as a new international actor in this field developed concepts of *lifelong learning*. What all of these concepts had in common was a focus on the learning processes of individuals rather than on education systems. As a result, self-organised learning processes gained in importance. Likewise, formal learning (within the education system), non-formal learning (arranged learning outside the education system), as well as informal learning (learning outside of educational institutions) became relevant. Besides the old basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic), these concepts call for so-called new basic skills (IT skills, language skills, and social skills). With the shift of emphasis from educational systems to individual learning, individuals become masters of their own competencies: they have to be able to acquire competencies on an ongoing basis throughout their lives and in all sorts of places. This includes a shift of responsibility from education systems towards individual learners.

Nowadays, lifelong learning is a catchword used widely in everyday language. Although we have had this prolonged political discussion, lifelong learning is still more of a political concept than an educational one. As a result, all we can find are selective, disconnected approaches. In the German context, we may even ask about the extent to which the term *lifelong learning* has been pushing back the traditional term *Bildung* in everyday language.

Against this background, Licínio C. Lima and Paula Guimarães, in the present study guide, provide an analytical approach to adult learning and educational policies. They focus on three analytical models: the *democratic-emancipatory model*, the *modernisation and state control model*, and the *human resources management model*. Based on these theoretical approaches, they present an analysis of the lifelong learning policies of the European Union and the UNESCO. By focusing on the UNESCO, the authors show that European policies cannot be seen as separate from those of other international organisations. The UNESCO policy on lifelong learning also has an influence on European approaches towards lifelong learning.

Readers who recently completed the European Master in Adult Education course at the University of Duisburg-Essen will recognise some of the exercises and tasks provided at the end of each chapter in this study guide. During his term as DAAD Guest Professor of Adult and Continuing Education and Learning in 2008, Licínio C. Lima developed a course on European Strategies in Lifelong Learning. After a few weeks of preparation, Licínio C. Lima and a group of students with a focus on policy analysis went to Brussels to meet with several lifelong learning stakeholders. Based on these meetings, he developed an analytical cluster for students to use when examining a stakeholder's approach to lifelong learning. With the help of this didactical concept, students did not only get to know the different approaches but also learned to think analytically and to develop a critical attitude. Since 2008, much to the benefit of an increasing number of students, Professor Lima has returned to Duisburg-Essen each year to teach this highly successful course. The underlying didactical approach has also been included here. A very warm thank you to Licínio C. Lima and Paula Guimarães for all the work and dedication they put into preparing this study guide.

Regina Egetenmeyer

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, the ideal of lifelong education (LLE) has made a noticeable comeback, even though it is now being restated in mainly economic and instrumental terms, and is centred on a pragmatic conception – that of lifelong learning (LLL). But lifelong learning sometimes fails to cater to a progressive political-educational project or to a critical pedagogical rationale, as if the lauding of learning were due to it being something good and useful in itself, regardless of its goals, values, processes, and so on.

The educational scope of certain adult learning and education (ALE) processes, concerned with qualification or the acquisition of skills, depending on the language current in policy discourses today, is often missing from or watered down by European strategies and their programmes. This means that education – taken as a whole to embrace not only technical and instrumental knowledge and vocational skills but the cultural, social, and political dimensions oriented towards a critical interpretation of the complex world we live in, as well as citizens' participation in the process of global change – becomes secondary when it is not related to bureaucratic processes of schooling and formal education. We are at risk of subordinating ALE to a pedagogism with economic and managerial roots that is based on the naïve belief that society and the economy will change in supposedly clear directions, established by consensus, through individual LLL. It sometimes seems that each social and economic problem will tally with a learning, re-qualification, re-socialisation, or re-education therapy as if it were possible to solve structural problems only, or mostly, by means of biographic solutions through the insular action of useful, effective, highly competitive, and solitary individuals.

Education for the economy, for instance, was relevant in the report *Learning to Be*, coordinated by Edgar Faure for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in the early 1970s. Its authors proposed an education to enable individuals to understand economics, and to transform and democratise it, not merely to reproduce it – that is, to enable them to present a critique of the capitalist economy based on a



humanist philosophical register and a political reference that combined radical analysis and social democratic proposals.

In fact, it would be irresponsible today to conceive of ALE *turning its back* on economics and the issues of employment and joblessness. This does not mean, however, that it is agreed that adult education (AE), vocational education and training (VET), and LLL are reneging on their ethical and political responsibilities of critically reading the social reality and its possible transformation, and of stepping up democratic citizenship. The political orientations and the strategies that adopt a position of mere functional adaptation to the imperatives of the new capitalism, which reduces LLL to being a small part in its multifaceted universe, have therefore been subject to criticism. This means that a democratic conception of ALE can neither ignore the economy, nor can it adopt a passive attitude of subordination, overwhelmed by the force of economic interests that do not emerge democratically but from the competitive market, which, by definition, does not seek to produce social justice and human solidarity.

There is a permanent tension between adaptation and change in any democratic education project that sets out to build subjects from history who are free, aware, and critical. Education would certainly be impotent and ideological, as Adorno has said (cf. 2002), if it ignored the goal of adaptation and did not prepare for life; but it would be open to criticism if it only promised the adaptation and production of 'well-adjusted people', to use Adorno's words, incapable of imagining 'possible other worlds' and of engaging in their social transformation.

There are many reasons, however, for acknowledging that the more humanist, democratic, and critical ALE policies may have eroded in the past few years. Education now tends to be replaced by individual learning, the social nature of education by strictly personal objectives, transformation by mere adaptation, and solidarity by rivalry. If this is so, then there is need for a critical analysis of that process of social and educational change, and of the institutional actors who may come to operate this policy shift – for example, international agencies and other supranational actors such as the European Union (EU), but also the nation state, the market, and civil society.

Some authors hold that the more pragmatic and technocratic LLL solutions have actually been relating life to a long series of learning experiences regarded as useful and effective, in tune with a certain economic rationality that tends to instrumentalise life and detach it from its less marketable aspects. Some approaches forget or reject the substance of life throughout learning, because proponents of this pragmatic concept of learning have opted for narrow standards of usefulness and individual adaptability, sometimes to the point of alienation.



Countering those utilitarian and 'human capital' perspectives are different theoretical approaches of education, as well as democratic and emancipatory conceptions of ALE. These maintain that the chief strength of education is, paradoxically, its apparent weakness: its own, almost always slow, rhythms; the trial and error tests; the uncertainty and lack of instant spectacular results; its processes of dialogue, sociability, and participation in decisions. This is why critical theorists see democratic education as incompatible with a purely technical type of training that is not based on values and goals, but focused exclusively on means, as happens with the phenomena of drilling and indoctrinating, or with all forms of conditioning human beings, no matter what the political, ideological, economic, or other agenda.

This study guide sets out to show students some of the contemporary discussions about public policies for ALE, to provide theoretical information and conceptual frames of reference that help to understand and to critically interpret the European strategies for LLL.

This goal is pursued through an effort at open dialogue with the reader: by presenting arguments, examining contradictions, interpreting conflicts and paradoxes, acknowledging obvious hybridism, and accepting the complexity and difficulty of studying contemporary education policies.

The literature referenced, the theoretical approaches studied, the concepts mobilised, and the systematic references made to some of the more important policy documents are designed to ensure that readers can critically understand and follow the authors' interpretations. It is always left to readers to choose their learning itineraries and the political and educational rationale to arrive at their own conclusions. It is for the authors to supply the analytical tools, discuss the various conceptions and social policy models of ALE, to indicate critiques, and sometimes to provoke readers intellectually, so that they can freely make their choices and disagree with the arguments presented. What was not intended was to assume an axiological neutrality of the authors' positions; trying to do so would be impossible and result in a deceit, or in an attempt to mystify reality and academic work in the social sciences. It is not possible to analyse the policies and strategies of LLL irrespective of our own theoretical approaches, world views, values, and educational conceptions. The authors have tried to be clear about their values and share them openly with readers in an effort to defend a democratic, critical, and emancipatory conception of ALE. But their main quest is not to get the reader's agreement. They want to achieve communication and, in particular, to contribute to the readers' critical and autonomous analysis, regardless of the individual conclusions, agreement, or disagreement they may come to. The exercises and tasks at the end of each chapter are intended to offer students the

chance to affirm their values, views of the world, and educational ideas, in addition to supporting self-directed study, individually and in groups.

It was thus thought necessary to explain the basic concepts of European education policy, to discuss their evolution in the past few decades, and to indicate the various conceptions and different meanings they have been acquiring in some of the more influential policy documents circulating internationally. The second chapter initiates a theoretical discussion that continues throughout the text and is revisited in greater depth in the subsequent chapters. It concerns a change that is far from being simply semantic or related to terminology; it is the change from *education* to *learning* in social policy terms. This process of conceptual change is interpreted in terms of policy change and is associated with different concepts of state, and with the role of the nation state in a context of globalisation, the appearance of new social functions ascribed to the market and civil society and, further, to the centrality of the individual learner. This involves highlighting the tensions arising from the intervention of various agendas, interests, and social actors (e.g. international agencies, trans- or supranational institutional actors, the nation state, the market in learning, civil society and non-governmental organisations, certain social groups, and the individual). It also involves indicating the levels on which they act: the *macro level* (concerning, for instance, state intervention), or even what could be called the *mega level* (international and supranational entities) and the *meso level* (with a variety of organisations), and finally the *micro level* (small groups and interaction among individual actors). The relations between the various levels that produce LLL policies and strategies and the levels of analysis employed by the observer are anything but linear. As a consequence, simple systems of causality or overdetermined interpretations (e.g. from the *mega* and *macro* levels to the *meso* and *micro* levels) are out of the question. In fact, it is impossible today to understand the European strategies for LLL without examining the growing influence of the European Union and international agencies over member states, organisations, and individual learners. But this does not mean that the social players mentioned are confined to more or less faithfully reproducing the orientations that afflict them, without scope for relative autonomy. Nor does it mean that the influences are simply top-down, ignoring the social players' capacity for interpretation and recontextualisation of ALE policies and strategies. The influences are mutual and in the bottom-up direction, too, even when considering the asymmetries of power that characterise the relations between actors.

This dialectical view is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3, where the authors present a theoretical proposal to interpret LLL strategies based on

several works, especially the studies by Griffin (cf. 1999a, 1999b), Lima (cf. 2003, 2008) and Sanz Fernández (cf. 2006). Three analytical models are described: the *democratic-emancipatory model*, the *modernisation and state control model*, and the *human resources management model*. This is a proposal for heuristic devices to support the interpretation of complex and diverse policies and strategies of LLL. Each analytical model should be seen as a kind of ‘ideal type’ construction in the Weberian tradition – that is, as a theoretical constellation of congruent dimensions which, in its pure form, is very hard to find in social reality. But approximations can be found between the theoretical models and the empirical data under analysis, provided that the three models are taken as a *continuum* and not as mutually exclusive alternatives, as though their dimension had been confined within rigid boundaries. On the contrary, the analysis accepts and favours the search for complex interactions between distinct dimensions belonging to each analytical model, which could lead to cross-fertilisation and hybridisation. As models comprising theoretical dimensions, they are potentially open to the inclusion of new dimensions, prompted by the analysis of the empirical reality and maybe resulting from readers’ input, based on the analysis of actual social action contexts.

The attempt to apply the three analytical models previously proposed to study the European strategies for ALE (Chapter 4) and the role of UNESCO in recent decades (Chapter 5), as well as the interpretation of similarities and differences between them, is the most important part of this work and the most demanding for the reader; however, it is also the most creative. It should be noted that the authors are not giving students a finished product in terms of interpretation; they do not even focus on all the most important policy actors and policy documents that could be chosen. In addition, there are national, regional, and local contexts, different cultural and educational traditions, institutional dynamics, social movements, as well as individual options that will powerfully influence how each student will react to these two chapters. This is also why the authors hope that readers will make critical use of the analytical tools and suggested interpretations provided throughout the text, and that they will not limit their involvement to merely completing the exercises and tasks provided at the end of each chapter. If students read the works mentioned in the text, and if they find other works and policy documents to read, then this will improve their ability to understand, to diversify their analytical perspectives, and to understand research data and conclusions that corroborate, deepen, complete, or even contradict the interpretations given here.

After a few final remarks, the study guide ends with a list of references and some links that might help students to delve deeper into the topic and to

make their own way through the myriad of possibilities out there to broaden their understanding.

If readers can find their own path in the rich, multifaceted world of ALE and enhance their critical skills, if they can test their creativity in terms of theoretically sound independent interpretation, and now and in the future take part in the never-ending educational process of *democratising democracy*, then the authors' greatest hopes will have been fulfilled.

## 2. Lifelong Education, Lifelong Learning, and the State

### 2.1 Some basic concepts for education policy analysis

This book discusses ALE strategies in the European context. It also looks at education and training policies and even discusses policies that have been developed in non-European countries and regions.

This discussion is sustained by certain concepts that are set out and explained below.

#### *Education policy, education politics, and strategies of education*

The discussion of ALE policies involves several levels of analysis, including the debate on education policy, education politics, and strategies of education.

#### **Keyword: Education policy**

Education policy relates to 'policy as such': to the priorities it includes, the education modes it favours, the regulation it implements, and the orientations that it establishes in terms of management and the administration of public services, for example (cf. Stoer, 1998). It is at the level of priorities, modes, regulation and orientations concerning management and administration that education policy is largely formulated: here, it is decided how education is supporting the accumulation process, providing a context for its continuing expansion and its legitimation; it is also here that the state's role in sustaining the referred accumulation process is decided. In fact, education policies have been seen as a main function of the state, which particularly involves the creation of constitutional forms, the building of places that may allow for modes of interest, representation, and negotiation to emerge, and the existence of forms of political rationality and decision as to who is entitled to provide education initiatives. The debate on such issues will provide relevant information on the possible role of the state in education (cf. Dale, 1992). It will also look at why a public policy requires a mandate that can be observed by the social expectations with respect to the implementation of various forms of provision, and by building coherent social systems.



The function of conceiving, adopting, and assessing an educational policy was assumed by the welfare state as an essential domain of social policies. In this type of state, social policies are conceived as a regulation mode within the nation state and the interaction of democracy and capitalism, a link that was essential for the development of Western and capitalist countries after the Second World War. Education policies have allowed for the building of public education systems. These systems are based on formal education and training provided in schools and vocational training centres that are attended by children and young people before they enter the labour market. Formal education and training thus aims to prepare individuals for the labour market. Simultaneously, it intends to create citizens and make them active members of democratic societies.

It is in the context of this interaction that AE has become strategically important at work, and has seen its profile heightened in people's social and family life. As a result, this domain is now subject to intense political bargaining between various actors in many countries, and it is at the centre of a number of social policies. In this line of thought, according to Bélanger and Federighi (2000, p. 40), 'the education of adults has become a concern for society.'

Overall, these policies incorporate four major functions (Bélanger & Federighi, 2000, pp. 64ff.):

1. 'Support for the construction of a collective identity.' This identity relates specifically to the promotion of citizens' active and democratic participation in a common and shared project of society. It therefore introduces into this debate issues related to the affirmation of civil rights and active citizenship – whether we are thinking of political rights; the right to work and social security; the right to education, to culture, to religious and/or identity expression; consumer rights; and rights of a territorial nature (e.g. to live in a particular place, or to belong to a certain territory).
2. 'Supplying the training needs of the economic system.' At issue here are the opportunities to access the knowledge and skills needed to enter the labour market. The educational and training possibilities offered to adults when changes in the methods of production occur are also considered.
3. 'Support to social cohesion policies.' This kind of support aims to remedy the inequalities that arise from social and economic changes and innovations. It frequently results in provisions targeting social groups that are economically deprived, while other groups benefit from specialised products. In many countries, we find the promotion of policies that emphasise social dualisation – that is, the education and initial training,

conversion, reintegration, and so forth of subjects who have been excluded from the labour market.

4. 'Orientation and the regulation of consumption.' Here we find policies that are structured on the relationship between production and consumption, particularly those directly linked to consumption, and many others that aim to protect the environment and safeguard the rational consumption of natural resources.

**Keyword: Education politics**

Education politics refers to the political process by which a policy is agreed upon by the various actors involved within the social pact (e.g. the state, entrepreneurial associations, trade unions, etc.). In terms of analysis, the focus is on the negotiations these actors engage in, that is, on a game in which interests are confronted by the means by which 'some actors lose and some actors win' (Stoer, 1998, p. 10). Thus, the relevant issues here include the sources of education policy, the function of education as a mode of regulation with respect to the social foundations of economic power, and the overall scope of education (cf. Dale, 1992).

Education politics is therefore closely related to the debate about power and control over the ends and outcomes of a policy. Within this line of reasoning, Griffin (cf. 2000) states that education politics is a central subject for anyone interested in studying education policies because it sheds light on other meanings that education principles, aims, and outcomes may cover. Core concerns include the analysis of the contradictions of education policy in relation to education access, social justice procedures, participation processes, and the like, as well as the patterns of education policy as they are linked to the main principles, goals, and general characteristics of the various actors (cf. Dale, 1992).

**Keyword: Strategies of education**

Strategies of education are the processes by which a policy is adopted. They involve the phases, junctures, rules, and norms that surround the achievement of a policy. The strategies of education concern the more instrumental dimension of a policy. The study of strategies stresses the importance of technical procedures while underplaying the political dimensions (relating to the values, principles, etc.) of a policy (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b).

Several works can be found on education policies, and these are called *policy studies*. Many authors have studied these themes in recent years. The definition of the limits of what can be achieved by an education policy, along with the preparation and implementation processes in the context of reconfiguring the nation state and globalisation, have attracted the interest of many researchers. Education politics and education strategies are often queried in their studies, as is the significance of the political options implemented.

It should be noted that some of these studies aim to lead to the creation of policies, for instance by containing recommendations for action or by supplying information and discussions that can inform the drafting of a policy. Other studies analyse existing policies in an effort to understand the processes that influence or determine their construction and their impact on society, or to acknowledge the values, presumptions, and principles that underlie a policy (cf. Stoer, 1998).

Traditionally, the main concern of education policy analysis has been public education systems. These systems organise the forms of provision that in many Western countries have been conceived as important mechanisms of social redistribution and social justice. The efficiency (or inefficiency) and the results of these systems, as well as the social inequalities they cause are important issues that have been approached by an extensive body of theory and research. Griffin (2000, p. 1) observed that education policy analysis has been contingent on the fate of the welfare state and the emergence of the neo-liberal state. Therefore, he argued that policy analysis had to be enlarged and concerned with politics, power, and control over the ends and outcomes of policy, by including:

1. The state, or some ultimate source of political authority and sovereignty over both the means and the ends of policy.
2. A system of bureaucratic institutions, ranging from departments and ministries of state to local administrations, down to individual schools or colleges.
3. Together, these constituted a system of compulsion which ensured policy compliance. (Griffin, 1999a, p. 339)

Therefore, the study of a policy entails certain necessary social conditions, such as the role of government, institutional structures, the funding given and control achieved by public instruments, which need to be considered when discussing public policies.



## **2.2 The welfare state, the neo-liberal state, and adult education policies**

In order to understand the impact of education policies, it is important to consider the changes that have been occurring in the state since at least the Second World War. As mentioned earlier, the state cannot be seen in isolation: the economy, especially the development of the most important mode of production of a country and a region, such as capitalism in Western countries, as well as civil society, its nature and characteristics, are important features to consider. In fact the state both mediates the relationship between the economy and civil society and relates directly to each of these actors. According to Dale,

in particular [the state] lays down key parameters (but again not the only parameters) of what is possible, for itself and for its relationship with economy and civil society. State institutional structures are a key means of translating and specifying the shape of economic, political and social problems. (Dale, 1992, p. 210)

Looking at the period from the Second World War until recent years, many authors agree that it is possible to identify two main forms assumed by the state in Western capitalist countries. These are the welfare state and the neo-liberal state.

### *The welfare state*

The welfare state was conceived in the wake of the Second World War. It benefited from proposals that introduced differences in the policies of economic liberalism adopted up to the mid-twentieth century. One of these was that the state should promote an open economy, though this might interfere with the aim of stimulating the economy (specifically, the regulation of income distribution, the control of the tendency to consumption, and the increase of capital and investment) and of promoting full employment (cf. Keynes, 1989; Davidson, 2010). This state intervention was supplemented by the adoption of social policies. These were intended to offset market dysfunction and to redistribute national income through monetary payments, social benefits, social assistance and training, and vocational re-training measures for young people and adults (Mozzicafreddo, 2000, pp. 8ff.).

### **Text Box 1: The welfare state according to Keynes**

The British economist John Maynard Keynes designed a theory in the quest for strategies to overcome the cyclical crises of capitalism, such as the Great Depression, to stimulate the economy, and to create jobs. He saw capitalist societies as 'machines of wealth production' even though they created inefficiencies. These inefficiencies encouraged differences in income distribution and discontinuities in employment. On this he said that 'the outstanding faults of the economic society in which we live are its failure to provide full employment and its arbitrary and inequitable distribution of wealth and incomes' (Keynes, 1989, p. 372). He analysed the effects of the changes caused by state intervention, with a view to stimulating the economy and fostering increased employment. Keynes saw the goals of state action as being to regulate income distribution, to control the tendency to consumption, and to increase capital and, consequently, investment. This intervention should include monetary and credit control by fixing taxes and interest rates, the publication of significant information on the state of the economy, public investment, especially in public works, and the maintenance of confidence levels among the various economic agents. Keynes argued that the state should intervene to ensure full employment, because unemployment is linked to low consumption and lack of investment. He believed that these factors jeopardised economic and social development.

(Keynes, 1989, pp. 372ff.)

Economic policies influenced by the Keynesian approach have emerged as answers to the inadequacy of global demand and market inertia. These anomalies imply that state budgets contain expenditure on investment of public interest, such as public works, which helps to improve the operating conditions of production, to boost the demand for goods and services in general, and to stimulate the direct supply of jobs and the labour market. Such policies form part of integrated processes of regulation and orientation of economic activities on a macro scale. In addition to these regulatory strategies favoured by the welfare state, there are other options – namely, tax policy, which aims to benefit the creation of incentive systems; monetary and credit policy; policies to stimulate business activity through subsidies; intersectoral payments that help increase productivity; and direct intervention that fosters a balance between production plants. This combination of policies underpinning state intervention in the economy and employment has a soothing effect on social conflict. Keynes argued that even though many people might harbour doubts about his theory, the proposed model would not only power the economy and create jobs but was al-

so more likely to foster social peace in the world than the old *laissez-faire* system. He based his reasoning on the fact that social conflict has various causes, some of which are economic, such as the pressures exerted by the working class on the owners of the means of production in the fight for employment, better pay, and better working conditions. These economic conflicts also include the corporate fight for control of markets. He argues that these divergences can be attenuated by planned state intervention, provided this is intended to promote welfare (cf. Keynes, 1989; Davidson, 2009).

The British sociologist Anthony Giddens believes that the welfare state is founded on three pillars. The first comprises the public institutions that seek to create a society in which work, taken as paid work preferably done by men in the industrial sector, occupies a key position. For this reason, social solidarity measures are directed at those who, for various reasons, are outside the labour market. The second pillar involves the existence of the nation. The welfare state is consolidated by public systems whose purposes are to build the state and foster cohesion by strengthening the processes of national solidarity (one of which is education). According to Giddens (1996, p. 137), 'who says welfare state says nation state.' The third pillar concerns risk management. This is in any case a goal of public policies that is achieved by social security mechanisms. Giddens has the following to say about this aspect:

The welfare state, from its origins to the present time, has been concerned with the management of risk, efforts at risk management indeed being a basic part of what 'government' in general has become. Welfare schemes are a form of social insurance. Insurance refers to any risk-management scheme oriented towards coping with an open future – a means of dealing with (predictable) hazards. Social insurance is about the disposal of risks in a well-creating, future-oriented society – particularly, of course, those risks that are not 'subsumed' in the wage-labour relation. (Giddens, 1996, p. 137)

Besides promoting full employment, the welfare state aims to gradually improve the living conditions of social groups, be they workers, professionals, managers, or employers. Public policies are devised with a view to improving the daily lives of the underprivileged and society as a whole, and to increase productivity. These ends are expressed in better working and employment conditions that enable risk, especially the risk of unemployment, to be lessened by providing support for people whose position in the labour market is precarious, or who are outside it. The aims of the welfare state also involve strengthening individual security and freedom, and helping everyone enjoy better living conditions. For these reasons, the defence of social rights and the definition of redistributive policies enable the state to hand over to the public administrative services those conflicts which, in previous times, marked the relations of civil society and of citizens with the state. It is through these ser-

vices that the state assumes a number of responsibilities whose purpose is to prevent individuals and families from 'falling into the mesh of the capitalist system' (Offe, 1994, p. 135). Through its intervention, the state mitigates the effects of economic cycles, promotes full employment, and offers opportunities for social mobility. Along these lines, Rose argued that the state was no longer the source of social conflicts; rather, it is at the edge of conflicts and is emerging as the custodian of social progress for all (Rose, 1999, p. 120). He also asserted that

this image of social progress through gradual amelioration of hardship and improvement of conditions of life won out over the image of social revolution on the one hand and the image of unfettered competition on the other. The social state would have the role of shaping and co-ordinating the strategies which would oblige all partners, no longer antagonists, to work towards and facilitate social progress. (Rose, 1999, p. 135)

In short, the welfare state is a mode, with many forms, aimed at coordinating capital and labour; it is a pact supervised by the state with the purpose of legitimising capitalist accumulation, and at the same time guaranteeing freedom, social rights, and public provision of education, health, social insurance, and the like.

### *The welfare state and adult education*

The welfare state is based on a political model of linear economic growth that anticipates development and improves the supply of jobs. Initially, the state intervenes in the economy to improve the quality the labour force, to train it, and to adapt it to job requirements. The policies of the welfare state with regard to AE, also called social democratic policies by Griffin, were characterised by the intervention of the state in this domain and by its redistributive role, particularly with respect to the opportunities of access to and participation in formal and non-formal education for underprivileged individuals and groups. The welfare state conceives and promotes AE provision and sees its intervention as a function of the state. This is why AE clearly became a public domain, together with the state's responsibility to create the conditions of a social democratic society (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b, 2000).

State intervention extends to fighting the negative effects caused by growth with the help of social assistance policies designed to rebalance the social system in cases when the labour market becomes segmented, the labour force decreases, or unemployment increases. According to Offe, these policies are intended to develop *proletarianisation processes*. These processes aim to incorporate people of working age into the labour market who, for var-



ious reasons, do not have a job. The state therefore supplies the resources required to train such people so that they can then work. These policies also make it possible to intervene in the labour market to create a balance between the number of workers and job opportunities, thereby helping to bring about social stratification (Offe, 1994, pp. 65ff.).

Offe also believes that social policy in the welfare state consists of carrying out 'a long-lasting transformation of self-employed into employed persons'. He argues that the wholesale transformation of the 'dispossessed paid workforce into an active paid workforce' is not possible unless social policies are in place that, in a narrow sense, operate to integrate the labour force into the labour market. If the labour force is to be valid and useful to the economy, then certain structural pre-conditions are required – including education, training, and socialisation – so that 'employed persons function like employed persons'. This is where public services and the provision of education enable the dominant class to control the general public. This control is effected by means of criteria to define who should be regarded as capable of employment, and who should not (Offe, 1994, pp. 80ff.). According to Bélanger and Federighi, the ultimate social policies aim to reintegrate people excluded from the productive system and to adopt coercive measures to force workers into such socialisation and training programmes (Bélanger & Federighi, 2000, p. 73).

### *The neo-liberal state*

Important economic changes were implemented after the 1970s, and these were accompanied by changes in the state itself, in the policies it carried out, and – in the final analysis – in society. The discussion about globalisation, its characteristics, and its impact has led a number of authors to argue that changes have occurred in the control exerted by the state over time and space as a result of the increasing overall flows of capital, goods, services, technology, information, and communication. Its sovereignty is being challenged by the establishment of supranational organisations.

The state's capture of historical time through its appropriation of tradition and the (re)construction of national identity is challenged by plural identities as defined by autonomous subjects. The state's attempt to reassert its power in the global arena by developing supranational institutions further undermines its sovereignty. And the state's effort to restore legitimacy by decentralising administrative power to regional and local levels reinforces centrifugal tendencies by bringing citizens closer to government but increasing their aloofness toward the nation state. (Castells, 2007a, p. 357, own translation)

New tendencies are found in public policies on ALE. Crowther and Martin note (cf. 2009) that the first is linked to the 'emergence of flexible capitalism' that values change and the temporary nature of work, skills, and relations. In this context, solidarity seems increasingly threatened because it needs to be cultivated on durable patterns of behaviour and reciprocity. So state interventions are short-lived, and projects that are more short-term are valued. As a result, the authors argue that 'this process of "permanent change" restricts the scope and effectiveness of action' (p. 32) by the state.

A second tendency relates to the fact that the state has become a *regulatory state* by trying to control, limit, reduce, and privatise the provisions that most typify it, and to socialise people for the market. This has deepened divisions between people. The 'processes of individualisation and remoralisation' of the working class are key strategies because 'people who make the right market choices are those who are able to look after themselves'. As a consequence, lifelong learning policies, active citizenship, and social inclusion are turning 'public problems into personal issues' (Crowther & Martin, 2009, p. 32).

Another tendency is linked to the growing importance attached to the *growth of a new managerialism* and the purpose of exercising tighter control over policy outcomes. Certain mechanisms are used that enable the state to reduce the aid it provides if the processes implemented are failing to achieve the desired outcomes, and these are usually ambitious. This situation has created constraints on the exercise of autonomy; it has also had the effect of reducing the areas in which public policy can be opposed, and of decreasing the likelihood of finding other forms of social intervention. In these circumstances the fear of *external threats* (like internal threats), *increased surveillance*, and *the reduction of public freedom* are becoming more obvious, as localised consequences of globalisation, too, given that there are economic and political centres that are competing with states. The same authors say that one of the answers established to address the difficulties that have arisen from this trend is the restructuring of states' policy-making in response to the influence of blocs or supranational organisations. While power is concentrated in a more remote body, state legitimacy is retained by developing local instruments of power and control. The state is dispersing some of its functions and creating new patterns of governance in social partnerships that are tightly regulated. At the same time, the power of international organisations is also increasing. These bodies spread neo-liberal ideology and practices, directly and indirectly influencing policy on education, health, social security, and the economy. As a result, control of this political agenda has been shaped by these agencies, and imposed by 'think tanks' and experts who propose and

assess policy strategies. This has had the effect of curtailing opportunities for resistance and opposition (Crowther & Martin, 2009, pp. 32ff.).

A final tendency reveals a strong constraint felt by centres of *intellectual dissent*. Even though we may find some committed intellectuals whose values are linked to social transformation and the more radical AE agendas, the public role of such persons seems to have been discouraged in recent years (Crowther & Martin, 2009, p. 33).

The debate about the state and its intervention in society is giving way to another one, about the *redefinition* of the role of the welfare state and the emergence of the neo-liberal state with respect to its structure and functions and its withdrawal and/or expansion in the economic and social sphere. Other political rationales are thus being imposed – namely, managerialist and neo-liberal ones, based on the idea that the market is the most effective and efficient device for allocating and distributing resources (Alexiadou & Lawn, 2000, p. 26).

With respect to these developments, Boltanski and Chiapello say that we are now facing precisely the opposite situation to that which prevailed until the 1970s. It is a situation characterised by various contradictions, evidenced, for example, in the worsening economic and social situation for an increasingly significant number of people existing side by side with the runaway expansion and reorganisation of capitalism. They believe that these contradictions call into question the post-war social model and favour the emergence of a new ideological configuration of capitalism. This new configuration is based on the discourse of *managerialism* and its normative character, and on the importance ascribed to *projects* and *networks* (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2000, pp. 1ff.).

In recent decades, these factors have determined new patterns of state intervention arising from the extension of and the change in its responsibilities. Social policy and the labour market have remained highly interdependent; but in light of the restructuring of capitalism, new socio-economic approaches have emerged which, being largely modernising, are ascribing new meanings to these relations. Lima has called these new meanings the ‘resemanticisation’ of some core aspects of the development of capitalism. This resemanticisation of ideas, which is as relevant as industrial capitalism and Taylorism, leads to the ‘recontextualisation’ and ‘reconceptualisation’ of terms. This involves the assignment of new meanings to ideas such as ‘autonomy’, ‘decentralisation’, and ‘participation’ (Lima, 2002, pp. 19ff.), which are now in the service of a new approach that stresses economic rationality, quality, effectiveness, and diversification (Charlot, 2007, pp. 130ff.) – in other words, neo-liberal rationale.

### Text Box 2: The neo-liberal state policies

Neo-liberal state policies have appeared in response to the economic stagnation of the 1970s. Free trade and the free movement of capital worldwide, helped by technological advances, is the central plank of policies that seek to maintain the process of capitalist accumulation. These policies are underpinned by the notion that free trade (or market freedom) is the right alternative to the economic principles that guide intervention (seen by many as having failed) by the welfare state (cf. Castells, 2007b).

The following are among the mechanisms of neo-liberal regulation:

- 'privatisation and liberalisation of the public sector and deregulation of the private sector'
- 'support for the development of the private sector and for promoting an enterprise culture in the public sector as well as "flexible" working and wages'
- 'expanding the role of social management in the private sector, profit-making or not-for-profit, through the increase of quangos' (non-governmental organisations performing governmental functions often in receipt of funding or other support from public authorities)
- 'the promotion of precarious employment policies, increased insecurity and reduced wages'.

(O'Brien & Penna, 1998, p. 156)

The neo-liberal view is that the state should take on a less obvious but simultaneously more decisive role in the economy by offering operating conditions to a market that is *artificially* free, as Olssen and Peters allege. This would involve a 'positive conception of the state's role', because the state would have to create conditions for the market to function, and would have to ensure that people, rationally guided by economic interests and entrepreneurs by nature, enjoy the conditions to compete. For these reasons, state intervention should strive to ensure freedom in economic relations, in consumers' rational ability to choose, in competition, and in individual initiative. The state should therefore guarantee to promote specific regulatory mechanisms, such as audits, assessment, and the fostering of rational management principles (Olssen & Peters, 2005, p. 315).



### *The neo-liberal state and adult education*

The neo-liberal state denotes a change in the state's role in AE as it shifted from being a *service provider* to being a *service coordinator* for customers of decentralised and fragmented education and training systems. This new role sets out to encourage economic competitiveness in the context of a new international order, along with an emphasis on the individual and their responsibility in terms of education and training. The pursuit of this new goal is backed by a mode of governance that, on the one hand, aims to transfer public responsibility for stimulating certain provision to the private and non-government sectors and, on the other, accentuates a growing centralisation of state power when it comes to the organisation and distribution of goods and services (O'Brien & Penna, 1998, p. 157).

These changes have been accompanied by the defence of education (and training) in the service of the trio of productivity, competitiveness and growth, as Canário notes (1999, p. 93). The apology of this trio cannot be separated from the shift from an economic model of full employment, which sustained the welfare state, to a knowledge-based economy, which generates transformations in the production of knowledge – how it is created, acquired, transmitted, and organised. The knowledge-based economy is associated with an *economy of plenty*; new meanings have been assigned to distance, to the deterritorialisation of the state, and to investment in human capital. This valuation is related to new relations established between education, learning, and employment. In the knowledge-based economy, education is reconfigured as a form of knowledge that makes it possible to decide on the future of work, the organisation of knowledge institutions, and the way society will be in the future (Olssen & Peters, 2005, p. 331).

Contrary to the welfare state, the neo-liberal state envisages a minimal role in which it promotes a fairly broad set of strategies that aim to replace the model of social democratic public provision with one in which people and lifelong learning are central, and that foresee the privatisation and marketisation of education and training initiatives. This model sustains policies that involve the state pulling out of a number of social domains, related to both provision and benefits.

Therefore, the welfare state has adopted social policies, such as education, which are at the heart of social democratic functions. Within these functions, the concept of lifelong education has played an important part, as was outlined for instance by UNESCO in the *Faure Report* (cf. Faure et al., 1972) and in the *Delors Report* (cf. Delors et al., 1996). However, given the conditions of technological change and global competition experienced in the last three

decades, many authors have proclaimed the ‘crisis’ of the welfare state. This crisis is central to the policy analysis of lifelong learning due to the changes that occurred in the state itself and to shifts in policy aims and domains of intervention. Griffin (1999a) stated that, according to this argument,

the social democratic approach to lifelong learning is a social and not simply a public approach, so that the policy shift currently identified might be described as being from an interventionist to a facilitating role of the state: from policy to strategy. (p. 331)

In the face of ‘crisis’ and the emergence of the neo-liberal state, the public provision of adult education has been progressively conceived as lifelong learning, as an individual matter, and as experience and moments of learning occurring in non-formal or informal contexts. As stated by Griffin:

The combined effects of globalisation and competition, the onset of worldwide communications systems and embracing the neo-liberalism of the marketplace, have the effect of considerably reducing the scope for redistributive or welfare policies on the part of government. The role of government is seen as creating the conditions in which individuals are most likely to maximise their own learning. But the ultimate responsibility lies with them. This is consistent with the individualism of the competitive market economy, but also with the idea that the state should interfere as little as possible in the lives of individuals. (Griffin, 2000, p. 11)

Thus, it can be questioned if lifelong learning is a social and public domain – that is, a system of public education in the welfare state sense of the concept. For this purpose, lifelong learning can be seen as a strategy which has implied that the government has abandoned control over the outcomes of policy and has restricted itself to organising the means.

## **2.3 Lifelong education and lifelong learning**

Lifelong education (LLE) and lifelong learning (LLL) have been the two core ideas for AE as a space for theoretical reflection. They are concepts that may be tackled by more pragmatic conceptual approaches, by those of a humanistic tendency, and even by those linked to radical pedagogy (cf. Finger & Asún, 2001). As such, they are ideas that see education and learning as inclusive, varied, and complex processes. These diverse and diversified processes have served as a counterweight to the predominance of those of a formal, strongly school-based nature, which have dominated the thinking and intervention in AE in what Canário calls (2001a, p. 86) ‘the contamination of the school-based form’.

Although these are pivotal concepts for AE from the theoretical standpoint, such ideas have also bestowed an institutional identity on AE, especially after UNESCO published proposals such as LLE and the learning society at the start of the 1970s. But they are not concepts in the sense of being tools of theoretical analysis; they are, above all, ideas disseminated by international organisations that advocate ascribing a relatively coherent framework to a field of practice which until then had been marked by heterogeneity. In social responsibility and in social justice, this framework in fact has significant aspects through which an attempt is made to further the humanisation of development (cf. Finger & Asún, 2001).

UNESCO was particularly important for developing AE as a public policy. According to Santos Silva, intervention by this body was like ‘a structuring vector’ in the field of AE (Silva, 1990, p. 15). With its commitment to lifelong education, this organisation tried to effect an innovative combination of various forms of formal, non-formal, and informal education. Uniting such disparate modes expresses an appreciation of times and spaces in which both education and learning occur. Lifelong education is based, moreover, on a strong critique of the school and on the fact that in over three decades, the education systems of many countries have failed to meet people’s expectations of upward social mobility.

This is because UNESCO’s concern over LLE came at a time when several principles of the welfare state had been challenged – for example, optimism with respect to development, prosperity, and the ability of school to foster equal opportunities. A number of works have shown that despite rising expenditure, education is less able to dilute or eliminate economic, social, and educational inequalities than used to be thought. New proposals in terms of public education policies have therefore been appearing. They have sought to combine some very distinct aspects: ‘a humanist and utopian vision of society and education and a markedly Marxist desire for social transformation’. This is why they unite ‘the need to build a fairer society, which offers better conditions for life, with the importance of people adapting to the changes’ (Rubenson, 2004, pp. 29ff.). These concerns would lead to the appearance of the learning society, based on a humanist conception of education. Hutchins (cf. 1970) observed that this would be a society in which every man and woman, at every stage of grown-up life, and in all the institutions where they experience life, succeed in learning, fulfilling, in becoming human. Olesen had this to say:

Lifelong Learning was originally launched as a democratic and humanistic project, closely connected with ideas about equality. Its meaning was to indicate that not only children and youngsters but also of [sic] the adult population must learn and should have access to

educational provision. Especially in an international context this idea of general and political education was endorsed idealistically. It was in it self [*sic*] a part of the enlightenment optimism on behalf of education. Instead of education once for a life time the early creators of the idea assigned a democratising and liberating force to the permanent availability of education and learning. On the national levels in most countries this programmatic policy was not regarded to be very committing, mainly taken into account by NGOs. But this original meaning is still an aspect [*sic*] of the meaning of the concept. (Olesen, 2005, p. 1)

Quite distinct from LLE, LLL forms a part of a wider policy for reforming the welfare state itself (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b). Finger and Asún argue that the factors that have led to the privatisation and instrumentalisation of AE have also contributed a great deal to the emergence of LLL, the replacement of a certain understanding of LLE, and the development of a foundation for AE. Among the factors identified by these authors are

- globalisation, especially in financial and economic terms, which have caused social and economic polarisation by drawing a distinction between the haves and the have-nots, devaluing employment, allowing economic actors to appear who seem to want to destroy the market, in what the authors call ‘turbo-capitalism and the casino economy’
- individualism and the predominance of education conceptions centred on the subject and individualised learning
- the state’s retreat and the reconfiguration of public policies that consolidated the nation state and the welfare state based on principles such as the privatisation of benefits and services, as well as deregulation. In addition, the weakness of the state as guarantor of law and order, and of the rights of the individual, is accompanying its growth in relation to corporations and (supra)international organisations.
- the ecological crisis that strongly questions the ideal of development lauded in the past.

Regarding LLL, Finger and Asún note that

learning is becoming a private or purely personal issue, thus abandoning all its collective dimensions. In parallel, this trend is reinforced by the market pressure towards privatisation, as adult education is no longer a responsibility of the public administration but of private bodies (e.g. charitable or for-profit organisations). On the other hand, adult education has become just one among many offerings in the ‘cultural market’ of society, which also means that adult education is increasingly subjected to the pressures of competition, conditions of supply and demand, and commercialisation. Thus, adult education is also becoming instrumentalised. (Finger & Asún, 2001, pp. 111ff.)

According to Colin and Le Grand, the appreciation of LLL raises an essential question: is it a slogan or an educational paradigm? As a slogan used by



authorities such as the European Union, LLL aims to promote employability by enabling workers to adapt to the technological and organisational changes taking place in the workplace. LLL here is synonymous with continuous vocational training: it retrieves certain facets of lifelong education, especially those related to work and jobs, generalises the ideas that training and learning in the work context are vital, and favours the organisation with sundry provisions as a function of economicist purposes (Colin & Le Grand, 2008, p. 2).

As an educational paradigm, LLL contains a proposal of social justice, because it gives people another chance to complete their formal education. For this, the more traditional and deterministic conceptions of initial basic education are replaced by permanent possibilities of training, learning, personal development, and so forth. But LLL also invests in some devices and processes of education and training that are more open, flexible, individualised, socially relevant, if individually significant, not to mention atypical in the case of actions where learning is central. Influences of popular education can be seen here, together with principles such as inclusion, social justice, and emancipation (Colin & Le Grand, 2008, p. 2).

In an area of reflection and practice where slogans and paradigms are contrasted, many authors are of the opinion that AE, influenced more visibly nowadays by LLL policies, is at a *crossroads*. This crossroads stems from the 'diverging roads' revealed by the latest developments in capitalist economics, the state's withdrawal from various social areas, and the crisis in the current model of society that refers to an ecological and economic impasse (Finger & Asún, 2001, pp. 93ff.).

But opinions on the paths to take are divided. Bélanger and Federighi, for instance, argue that it is in the dynamics established between decentralisation and the reworking of the role of the state that 'the liberation of creative forces' encompassed by AE can occur (cf. Bélanger & Federighi, 2000). From this perspective, even these difficult times embrace opportunities that stem from the fact that policies promoted by the welfare state are taking on characteristics of the *participatory welfare state*. These authors believe that the policies currently being adopted in a lot of countries exceed educational limits, thus allowing for a relevant social translation. Education thus extends beyond its educational boundaries to play an important part in terms of employability and work development. They are also policies which, thanks to the state's withdrawal from several social domains, allow for decentralisation to occur and for local contexts to gain relevance in defining and adopting policies to combat social inequalities through civil society organisations, for example. Bélanger and Federighi claim that 'the most obvious role of the

state in adult education in the last few years is surely the new priority ascribed to national policies for the social demand for training' (p. 275).

But others are rather more sceptical about the democratic, dialogical, awareness-raising, and reflective potential of these dynamics. Finger and Asún, for instance, say that the way out of this crossroads involves deinstitutionalising AE. This requires thinking critically about the education practice in organisations, interpreting the opportunities and challenges of the organisations that promote activities, and developing ways and means to overcome the established interests and the power in organisations and institutions (Finger & Asún, 2001, pp. 151ff.).

Other analyses go further and defend the construction of AE policies of 'fluid interaction between several perspectives', of 'mutual trust' between political and educational conceptions that actually value this domain and its role in society (Sanz Fernández, 2008, p. 95). Lima thinks these would be global and integrated policies that engage distinct approaches, principles, conceptions, methods, and forms of education work. This option would allow for a broader, inclusive, and complex understanding of education.

If education is free and democratic, for personal and social development, it will never be captured by reductionist schemes of subordination and adaptation to the imperatives of economic modernisation, competitiveness, and employability. However, education will always confront critically these aspects. But an education captured and tamed for merely instrumental purposes or for private interests simply ceases to be for freedom and democracy, in terms of critical education. This, maybe, is the nub of a fundamental problem that politicians and education policies have not yet been able to grasp – a problem of democratic education, and just that. (Lima, 2008, p. 56, own translation)

With this ideological debate of an economicist nature, it seems essential to see AE within a framework of education and lifelong learning as a continuing process that is wide in scope. Education is thus much more than attending school and training courses. It is a work in progress which, as Colin and Le Grand observe (2008, p. 3), involves considering a global culture of learning, education, and training; of assigning a positive image to these processes; and of emphasising the 'thirst for learning' and the importance of 'learning to learn'. In this context, the relative leadership of the state, the market, and civil society makes a considerable difference in terms of public policies on adult learning and education and influences this field of social and educational practice.

## Exercises and tasks

### *Exercise 1*

Keep in mind the characterisation of the welfare state given in this chapter and indicate

- its most important aspects
- the main reasons why the state directly intervenes in the provision of education
- the goals and strategies that tend to be valued most by the education policies typical of the welfare state
- the positive and negative consequences of the welfare state's intervention in ALE, according to different authors.

### *Exercise 2*

Neo-liberalism embraces a distinct conception of state, on which its criticisms of the welfare state are based.

- What are the main alternatives presented to state intervention?
- Why have economic competitiveness and the market acquired such key centrality in the neo-liberal state?
- What are the main impacts of individual preferences and freedom of choice in learning strategies?
- Indicate some characteristics of neo-liberalism in ALE strategies and give the reasons why they are labelled as positive or negative by different authors.

### *Task 1*

After you have carefully read the chapter on 'Neo-liberalism' by O'Brien & Penna (1998, pp. 78ff.), please indicate

- the main criticisms directed at the Keynesian welfare state by neo-liberalism
- the part played by the market in promoting justice and social well-being
- the chief consequences of the strategies based on individual preferences, on the theory of public choice, and on the focus on the 'demand side' in the priorities and practices of ALE.

## *Task 2*

Read the two articles by Griffin (1999a, 1999b) carefully.

- a) List the main concepts and keywords in the two texts associated with the 'Progressive Social Democratic Model'.
- b) List the main concepts and keywords in the two texts associated with the 'Neo-Liberal Welfare Reform Model'.
- c) In the articles, find some of the characteristics that Griffin calls 'Critical Social Policy Models' and establish possible connections with the traditions of popular education and liberal adult education, and even with views of critical literacy and critical pedagogy.
- d) Bearing in mind the conflicts between the 'Progressive Social Democratic Model' and the 'Neo-Liberal Welfare Reform Model', comment critically on the shift from the concept of education to the concept of learning in policy terms.

## *Task 3*

Working Groups: role playing for three groups of students and one moderator.

- a) Please pay attention to the arguments presented by Griffin.
- b) Choose a student to act as general moderator if the teacher is not present.
- c) Choose the members of each of the three groups.
- d) Each group selects two representatives for the presentation.
- e) All the members of each group will participate in the debate among the groups.
- f) Time:
  - reading and discussion of the instructions (15-20 m);
  - writing and justification of five policy statements (25-30 m)
  - initial presentation (5–10 m for each group)
  - discussion among the three groups moderated by one student (30 m);
  - synthesis by the teacher if present, or by the moderator (5-10 m).



### Basic Instructions for the Role Playing:

#### Group A – ‘The Social Democratic Group’ – The Role of the Welfare State in ALE

Remember that some of your basic concepts and pedagogical ideals are: LLE, social responsibility of the state towards the citizens, public provision, welfare state, social rights and solidarity, education for democracy and for changing social and economic inequalities...

You are against the Radical/Critical Group, but sometimes you agree with some of their arguments concerning the role of the state (provision, regulation, democracy ...). However, you see that group as political radicals, always against the bureaucracy of the state, against the market, capitalism, competitiveness, formal democracy.

You are extremely critical towards the Neo-Liberal Group and to the unique role of the market in ALE (too much vocational training, too much importance given to skills, competencies, qualifications, individual learning for the adaptation of individuals to the market ...).

Your arguments are to a great extent based on the tradition of UNESCO, and on authors such as Robert Hutchins, Edgar Faure, Paul Lengrand.

*Based on the mentioned aspects, write and present five policy statements based on a social democratic policy agenda for ale:*

- Defend those statements against the arguments presented by the other groups.
- Criticise the other groups based on your own policy agenda for ALE.
- Be creative and do not forget the solidarity towards marginalised groups.

#### Group B – ‘The Radical/Critical Group’ – The Critical Social Policy Models for ALE

Remember that some of your basic concepts and pedagogical ideals are: the role of NGOs and CSOs, critical social movements, anti-globalisation movements in ALE and Popular Adult Education in the tradition of Freire and of ‘Critical Pedagogy’, the democratisation of democracy, new social rights and social justice, new forms of social struggles, critical learning, education not for adaptation or adjustment but for change...

You are against the Social Democratic Group, but you can sometimes agree on the role of the state, on economic redistribution, public provision, state regulation, democracy...always under a more democratic and participative agenda.

However, you see that group as less advanced in democratic and emancipatory terms, but more engaged in formal democracy than in participatory democracy and critical and active citizenship.

You are extremely critical towards the Neo-Liberal Group and to the role of the market in ALE (too much vocational training, skills, competencies and qualifications for the global market in the new capitalism ...).

Your arguments are based on just a part of UNESCO ideals and mainly on Political and Popular Education, Radical Pedagogy, World Education Forum agendas.

*Based on the mentioned aspects, write and present five policy statements based on a critical policy agenda for ALE:*

- a) Defend those statements against the arguments presented by the other groups.
- b) Criticize the other groups based on your own policy agenda for ALE.
- c) Be creative, tough, and assertive (you are radical thinkers!).

#### Group C – ‘The Neo-Liberal Group’ – Against the Welfare State in ALE

Remember that some of your basic arguments and pedagogical ideals are based on the role of the market, individual choice, training for economic growth, learning for earning and competitiveness, deregulation and devolution of the responsibilities of the welfare state to individuals and to civil society, managerial reforms and privatisation ...

You are against the Social Democratic Group members because they are for the role of the welfare state in ALE, which for you means paternalism, bureaucracy, and control over the individuals and their freedom of choice, centralisation and inefficiency of public administration, regulation against the *invisible hand* of the free market, against consumer’s and client’s rights in the global ‘learning market’.

You are extremely critical towards the Radical/Critical Group and its policy agenda for ALE, because of their dangerous ideas of changing the world, being against learning as adaptation to the real and existing world, being against capitalism, liberal democracy, vocational training, employability, skills, and competencies, which are considered by the Radicals as forms of alienation through instrumental learning ...

Economists, more than educational thinkers, and organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, and the Davos Economic Forum are your main references.

*Based on the mentioned aspects, write and present five policy statements based on a neo-liberal policy agenda for ALE:*

- a) Defend those statements against the arguments presented by the other groups.
- b) Criticise the other groups based on your own policy agenda for ALE.
- c) Be creative, assertive, and show your confidence in the market.



### 3. The Analysis of Adult Learning and Education Policies

#### 3.1 Analytical policy models of adult learning and education: Introduction

Finger, Jansen, and Wildemeersch (1998) developed a debate within which adult education as a field of research, theory-building, and practice is seen as reflecting historical developments with regard to changes in a societal context – and with particular regard to changes in Europe, North America, and third-world countries. The discussion focuses on historical origins. Therefore, these authors refer to emancipation and re-education in European AE; to utilitarian, liberal, and radical tendencies in North American AE; and to AE between modernisation and radical decolonisation in third-world countries. They also stress challenges that trap countries between modernisation and radical decolonisation. In addition to exploring AE history, the authors also analyse the intellectual origins of the field. They debate liberal-progressive philosophies and declarations, personal growth approaches, and the radical counter-critique. However, owing to the post-modern condition, globalisation, and the erosion of the state, ‘the entire project of adult and continuing education seems to have lost much of its historical legitimisation, and is surrounded by a serious doubt about the direction that should or could be taken’ (Finger et al., 1998, p. 14).

In this very specific context, where AE – as mentioned earlier – is at a crossroads (cf. Finger & Asún, 2001) and characterised by contradictory options and trends, Finger et al. (1998) argue that there is a need for critical reflection on current changes by using complex analytical models.

More recently, Olesen (2010) has tried to reflect critically on ‘the multiple societal nature and functions of adult learning’ (p. 1). Like the previous authors, Olesen distinguishes three main types of AE (defined by their main content) that have allowed for the development of different educational traditions: basic literacy education with respect to cultural integration in the nation state; community and popular education; and education for work, such as continuing education and training. The author argues that the complexity of today’s world means that ‘much of the recent discussion in adult education is a clash between educational cultures’. In fact,

on the one hand, there is a humanistic focus on personal and political self-articulation, which seems to be inherited from the traditional functions of community learning and liberal adult education. On the other hand, there is the instrumental perspective of lifelong learning for work, theoretically underpinned by human capital theory and similar frameworks of understanding. (Olesen, 2010, p.1)

In the context of modernisation, economic, social, and cultural changes have taken place due to the development of capitalist economies that have led to modernisation in which schooling, especially formal education, has had a relevant role to play. In these complex circumstances, ideological struggles have occurred, mainly related to intersections in historical experiences and societal functions of adult learning. As a result, 'discovering the multiple and infinite nature of the modernisation process' has become central to the study of adult education and lifelong learning policies (Olesen, 2010, p. 2). The search for a combined, complex way of understanding recent developments is crucial, and it is now extremely important to build policies that can involve the societal and individual dimensions of adult education and learning, experiential knowledge and abstract disciplinary knowledge, as well as the formal, non-formal, and informal settings in which education and learning occur.

This book identifies three models to analyse the social policies of ALE, along the line of reflection similar to that proposed by both Finger et al. and Olesen: *the democratic-emancipatory model*, in which democratic participation and critical education are very important in relation to AE actions, in particular popular and community education; *the modernisation and state control model*, based on public provision, the intervention of the welfare state, and generally dominated by educational guidelines; and *the human resources management model*, in search of economic modernisation and the production of skilled labour, led by vocationalist guidelines focusing on the production of human capital. These are models which, through their inclusiveness, seek to embrace a wide range of public policies adopted in countries and regions which themselves differ widely, as we shall now show.

Although the ALE public policy models differ from one another, it is important to note that they have been built up in a *continuum*. Despite being separate, these models are not exclusive and can coexist. So cross-fertilisation or hybridisation is possible: rather than presenting rigid artificial possibilities of analysis, it is expected that these models can be considered as heuristic devices for understanding public policies of ALE. The discussion on the developments in AE based on policy documents and public policies implemented by various countries therefore shows that, at a given time, one or two models had a higher profile than the others, or vice versa. But the dominant character of any one model at a particular time, at the expense of the previous ones,



does not mean that the subordinate models simply vanish from the scene: they tend towards a *marginal survival*, sometimes offering active resistance, and at other times persisting in a restricted, implicit, or modest form. In fact, though many countries favour policies based on upskilling and managing human resources, and on appeals to the market and civil society, other models are also used: some are linked to strong state intervention in the development of adult education and training systems, or to engaging civil society in the promotion of various public services. Since there may be some crossovers in the models, the reality may be marked by a considerable hybridism of orientations, which should be examined in light of the models proposed.

Furthermore, in this book we uphold the idea that overall integrated policies are possible (and even desirable). These policies would include intersections, creative tensions, and social experiment, and they would express the combination of different models. On the one hand, this combination would be compatible with the heterogeneity and plurality found in the sphere of adult education, in which we find respect for the diversity and wealth of forms, methods, devices, and audiences that characterise it. On the other hand, it would allow for the adoption of policies that envisage consistent measures. The responsibility of the state in these measures and the constitutional orientations with respect to the democratisation of education, aimed at everyone, but especially at those sectors of the adult population on the fringes of enjoying basic social rights, should be clearly defined and benefit from effective realisation (Lima, 2008, pp. 32ff.).

The characterisation of public policy models for AE involves different categories. Among them are the *political-administrative orientations*, the *political priorities*, the *organisational and administrative dimensions*, and the *conceptual elements* inherent to such policies.

### *Political-administrative orientations*

These orientations relate to the laws, rules, and norms that allow a public policy to be adopted. They consist of the legislative apparatus that provides the means for a policy to be implemented and include the establishment of conditions for accessing ALE initiatives and the involvement of the people attending them. They further include the financing, controlling, and assessment of the actions proposed, and the organisation and management related to the development of these activities.

### *Political priorities*

The political priorities concern the ends targeted by ALE, and the domains that a public policy focuses on, the relevant target-groups, and the amount of public funds allocated.

### *Organisational and administrative dimensions*

These relate to the organisation, administration, and management involved in adopting a public policy, including centralised and decentralised structures, the procedures and technical processes involved in carrying out ALE activities, quality assurance, evaluation, and accountability procedures.

### *Conceptual elements*

These are concerned with the theoretical references underlying the ends, methods, and processes inherent to implementing a public policy (e.g. ALE conceptions, pedagogical models, forms of participation and assessment, etc.).

## **3.2 The democratic-emancipatory model**

### *Appreciation of critical education*

In terms of the political-administrative orientations, actions undertaken under the democratic-emancipatory model are noted for the decentralised control of education policy and administration, and for the high degree of autonomy enjoyed by the organisations that stimulate ALE actions, among which are those linked to civil society. This model stresses *bottom-up* dynamics: activities are conceived locally and are self-managed, displaying an intervention that grants agency to educational associations. This option allows for the adoption of public policies whose object is to integrate basic groups and other non-state organisations, involving the publication of laws for this purpose and the allocation of resources and means to government departments or services and to a wide range of other bodies.

The political priority of this model is to build a democratic and participatory society by means of a fundamental social right: education. Concerns with solidarity, social justice, and the common good are important and justify

the establishment of basic education and education for democratic citizenship programmes, and the setting up of a broad range of initiatives to promote a civic sense and a critical and thoughtful capacity (cf. Guimarães, 2010).

The model embraces organisational and administrative aspects that meet these priorities and covers a wide range of initiatives: some involve claim processes whereas others are concerned with cultural projects, local improvement schemes, and the like. And there is a local effort at self-organisation in the large majority of these initiatives, involving considerable independence and notable creativity. Collaborative efforts are therefore utilised in an attempt to establish a radical or participatory democracy and to foster social transformation (Lima, 2008, pp. 37ff.).

With respect to the conceptual elements of this model, attention is drawn to the educational (not simply instructional) nature of the initiatives, through which local cultural traditions are valued, along with the adults' own life experience and understanding of the world. Based on ethical and political principles, often associated with research-action projects and participatory research in coordination with programmes backed by social policies (for childhood, the third age, vocational training, or for fighting poverty, including local job and rural development initiatives), these actions' chief goal is to promote critical-based education, aimed at political and economic democratisation, at the transformation of decision-making power, and at social change.

One of the most significant aspects of this model is the influence of the approach historically envisaged by UNESCO and by the critical pedagogies that uphold an idea of education as lifelong, humanist, aimed at social development, and promoting social responsibility, a collective destiny, and democratic and cosmopolitan citizenship. With respect to this approach, Griffin (1999a) suggested that, of the documents produced by UNESCO in the 1960s and 1970s, the report by Faure (cf. Faure et al., 1972) contained a comprehensive understanding of education and learning that covers formal, non-formal, and informal modes. A multi-faceted view of development (social, economic, cultural, and political) and participation (social, political, and civic) is allied to this understanding. From this viewpoint, UNESCO argues that public policies are instruments of social, economic, political, and cultural action for the state. The state is thus a determining agent for planning and intervention (Griffin, 1999a, p. 334), although open to challenge with respect to bureaucratic state control and under pressure to undertake democratic and participatory reinvention, particularly through social movements.

Sanz Fernández (2008) argues along the same lines, believing that actions related to this model are inclusive and enshrine education as a collective process where the participant is the 'protagonist of learning'. He argues that

adults' potential for learning should be used in ways to help them become aware of what they are capable of learning, of what they have already learned, and to orient and reorient their capacity for being educated, in accordance with Paulo Freire, for example. One facet of the model has interlinkable purposes, and it tries to motivate adults towards new learning and knowledge, and to foster new forms of participation and social and political intervention. There is a concern here to connect the individual facet of the act of learning to the collective facet of what is learned. The goals of learning are above all of a social and indirectly academic nature. Learning starts in social relations, continues throughout life, in all its aspects, based on social needs and leading to educational programmes that are meant for adults and their perceived needs. Learning potential is thus inherent to the learners and does not lie in education programmes. In fact, everyone can learn – what matters is being aware of what has already been learned and what can still be learned. Here, the education and learning contexts are expanding to other areas (apart from school) in life, and there is a flexibility of times and spaces in which to learn, as there is in content and methods. The author also says that learning is achieved by 'acting, intervening, [and] experimenting' in a process in which the reference is the person, oriented toward their development in the social context. Thus

a response to the challenges that life poses is sought, rather than passing all the subjects in the academic programmes. Developing to the full the potential to learn and to meet the challenges responds to a dynamic of learning to the full and is an encouragement not to compensate for past deficiencies, but to face up to present and future challenges. (Sanz Fernández, 2008, p. 84, own translation)

Based on the social needs of learning, ways and means have been devised that take into account the knowledge that adults bring with them – even illiterate adults, since, as Freire noted, interpreting the world came before interpreting words (cf. Freire, 1982). These devices are operated in a specific context in which the characteristics of the context are relevant to what should be discussed and what should be learned, seeking the full development of the abilities of each individual. Characterised by flexibility in the organisation and administration of spaces, times, content, methods, and so forth, these devices aim to create audiences that are participatory, managers of social action, committed, and pledged to social change (Sanz Fernández, 2008, pp. 82ff.).

### *Developments in ALE involving emancipation*

This model has had a big impact on various ALE contexts (cf. Guimarães, 2010). In Europe, until the mid-twentieth century, workers' groups and trade



unions, folk high schools, social movements, pedagogical missions, and the like sought to build a 'project to promote political and civic awareness in citizens' (Finger & Asún, 2001, p. 97). Influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment or by others distinctly about worker and trade union education, many of these projects were designed to solve the problems faced by societies and benefited from charitable and voluntary work. As Finger et al. observe:

As such, the movements had an intensive re-education meaning: next to the promise of a materially more decent life, they offered people some form of ontological security, while convincing them that the project which they adhered to made historical and existential sense. (Finger et al., 1998, p. 3)

Let us look at the initiatives promoted by Danish folk high schools influenced by N.F.S. Grundtvig's thinking. These schools played an important part in organising actions that were at first aimed at certain social élites, particularly small and medium-scale farmers who had no access to education. They steadily involved other groups, encouraged their participation in political life, and fostered 'more democratic political cultures' (Hopkins, 1990, pp. 28ff.). Initially, the actions implemented had more influence in rural areas and were an alternative to the formal education system; later on, others offered supplementary education activities and history, literature, poetry, and so on, which reinforced national cultural identity. As a result, the recognition of the work done by these organisations led to Denmark passing legislation in 1892 whereby the state funded the activities provided (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1990, p. 287).

Another good example is Sweden. A number of bodies were created after 1868 to undertake actions to promote education (*folkbildning*). These organisations were notable for their freedom, independence of thought, and autonomy, and they developed group activities, open classes, and so on that met specific educational needs. At first, these schools were attended by landowners; later the workers used them as a way of gaining power (cf. Larsson, 1998, 2001; Norbeck, 1979; Vallgård & Lima, 1985; Vallgård & Norbeck, 1986).

Among the folk education actions undertaken in Sweden and in other Scandinavian countries, study circles have turned out to be particularly significant initiatives in terms of fostering democracy and self-management, as well as critical and transformative education (cf. Larsson, 1998, 2001; Vallgård & Norbeck, 1986).

### Text Box 3: Study circles

Within this movement, a specific education format, the study circle, began to spread in the early twentieth century and was supported by the state from 1912. Study circles encouraged worker education along with the education of the lower middle classes and farmers; this meant the format benefitted people from various social and professional groups whose common denominator was their involvement in educational initiatives (Vallgård & Norbeck, 1986, pp. 13ff.). On this, Vallgård and Norbeck say that the study circle

appeared at the beginning [of the twentieth century] amid the then young popular movements. They were temperance societies that needed to prepare their members for working in groups. It was the trade union and political movement that understood that the workers had to have more knowledge to enhance their interests. They were consumption cooperatives that had to train people responsible for accounting and goods. (Vallgård & Norbeck, 1986, p. 14, own translation)

Study circles tackled a range of topics, some more academic and others of a general nature linked to trade union action, manual work, dance, sport, culture, and Swedish identity. Issues related to the modernisation of agriculture and the development of science, specifically natural sciences and technology, were also discussed. For the adults taking part in these circles, the intention was to acquire and share new knowledge; another purpose was to encourage modes of educational work to enable groups to be more socially and politically interventionist. The teaching methods used helped foster civic education in these initiatives, promoting the ability to take decisions in a formal democratic context, thereby contributing to social change.

(cf. Larsson, 1998, 2001; Norbeck, 1979, p. 37; Vallgård & Norbeck, 1986, p. 14)

Other initiatives can be identified in other countries. In England, for example, the actions implemented for non-formal and non-vocational adult liberal education by the Workers' Educational Association promoted the expression of will and the opinion of adults and upheld the principles of the Enlightenment. It was intended that these actions would make people more enlightened (Künzel, 1990, p. 305). The political recognition of the importance to British society of educating adults is stated in the 1919 report (cf. British Ministry of Reconstruction, 1919).

In Germany, the Society for the Propagation of Popular Education (*Gesellschaft für Verbreitung von Volksbildung*), founded in 1871, was set up to support the development of popular emancipation movements. This body



worked to set up other organisations that would spread culture and knowledge, establish public libraries and increase the number of classes and expository sessions open to the public. The university extension was also invigorated; here, the aim was to disseminate academic knowledge in accordance with the principles of the Enlightenment. This Society's efforts, and those of others in the field of popular education, led to that very expression, *popular education* (*Volksbildung*), becoming widespread. Popular education started out as education of the people, of ordinary people who are distinguished from those who have an erudite culture. As such it was an elementary, entry-level education that expressed the boundary between the various social groups and between other bodies that stimulated job-related training actions and received public funds in return (Lattke, 2008, p. 41; Nuissl & Pehl, 2000, pp. 11ff.). This was how civil society gained strength, becoming self-organised and demanding, with respect to both the state and the market.

It was in the France of the French Revolution that the idea that (adult) education was important for constructing a modern and fairer society composed of 'free men' and was institutionalised for the first time. In the same context, in 1794, the Convention approved a document that led to the creation of the first AE centre: the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (*Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers*). At the same time, various social groups and organisations invested in *education of the people* through actions that were sustained by strongly emancipatory purposes, such as the workers' movement for popular education. The intellectual confessional movements should be mentioned, if only because they are at the root of socio-cultural heritage projects (cf. Dumazedier, 1977).

Portugal developed later. It was not until, initially, the First Republic (1910–1926), and then again after the democratic revolution in 1974, that democratic and emancipatory initiatives were developed with government support. These actions were fostered by state bodies, but to an even greater extent by non-state entities, in all kinds of projects and programmes. The popular education activities that were developed in the wake of the 1974 revolution (25 April) elucidated this aspect, in particular the work done between popular associations and the Ministry of Education through the General Directorate of Permanent Education. Several quite separate initiatives were implemented, in particular the literacy programme, cultural and socio-educational animation projects, basic education actions, and so on. In this complicated historical context, there was an explosion of highly varied initiatives and actions integrated in community development projects undertaken by popular associations and by relatively informal groups that were motivated to respond to requests from local communities.

Internationally, too, the approaches to popular education and basic literacy still represent relevant references for organisations in the World Social Forum and the World Education Forum, and in varied social movements represented by institutions such as the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), for instance. Here, the aim is to devise novel ways of thinking and acting. Thanks to state aid, these bodies favour the reinvention of modes of education often associated with non-capitalist forms of production (cf. Santos & Rodriguez, 2003).

### 3.3 The modernisation and state control model

#### *The importance of basic education*

Another model values education in a context of social and economic modernisation. In light of the interplay between democracy, economics, society, and culture, education policies seek to unite functions that favour the processes of accumulation and legitimisation, emphasising the interventionist, dirigiste character of state action. With a backdrop of a Fordist work pattern, the state controls the means and ends of public policies, for which it profits from a mandate to achieve certain goals and outcomes that target improved social justice, equality, family and community solidarity, and social cohesion (cf. Lima, 2008).

For this role, the state has acquired a significant regulation of the social and economic system, thus enabling public policies to aim at achieving social rights through the action of social security systems and the application of sundry procedures. As education is an essential pillar of social policies in the construction of a democratic capitalist state, it involves a set of processes that are directed at ensuring equal opportunities for everyone, especially for those who are less able to get education and training. The rules associated with increasing and expanding opportunities of access to successful education are getting more and more attention from the government. Its impact is therefore increasingly evident in practice, leading to the formalisation and bureaucratisation of processes (cf. Lima, 2008). The sanctions associated with failure to comply with the established rules have played a part here, and the tightening processes associated with these rules are clearer (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b).

This model stresses the *functional* nature of education, in which the welfare state fosters economic growth and full employment. This intervention aims at economic and social modernisation, looking at school education as

the most valid instrument for this purpose. Education, seen above all as the teaching given in school, is essential to training citizens (cf. Griffin, 1999a).

This model is based on orientations that have an essential dimension in the centralised control of policy and the administration of education carried out by the state, through specific departments. It is a model that tends to underestimate the action of bodies linked to civil society; as such, it rarely gives priority to popular education and socio-educational associations which were crucial sectors in the previous model (cf. Lima, 2008), though it may simultaneously belong in the area of state control.

Here, state intervention would involve different levels (mostly state ones) of management and administration of supply, stopping the market from establishing initiatives based on rules of supply and demand and excluding civil society from inventing alternative ways of educating. Long-term education policies, strategy, planning, and financing are ideas that combine in this model in an effort to coordinate the social, economic, and cultural aspects. Education is seen as an opportunity aimed at the collective, at society, and it can restrict individuals from a more profound intervention (Griffin, 1999b, pp. 434ff.).

Bodies such as schools, promoting formal education (i.e. regular teaching), are part of this model, and their profile is being heightened (cf. Guimarães, 2010). These organisations are promoting courses for young people and adults, many of whom dropped out of formal education. These bodies have their own rules and form a public system. They are sustained by administrative procedures and markedly bureaucratic management, seeking efficiency and efficacy. They are organisations that promote initiatives which lead to formalisation and school-type education for adults. This entails complex issues of failure, difficulties of coordination with out-of-school education and, especially, with the rationale of popular education and local associations. In this model, which is based on a centralised paradigm of school education, the emphasis is on school certification at levels formally required by (regular daily) basic and secondary education, and adult students complete the same courses also taken by regular students (Lima, 2008, p. 41).

The most striking conceptual elements are related to reducing the field of adult education practice to formal education and to stressing the importance of targeting vocational training at promoting economic growth. This is why the conception of ALE in this model is largely reduced to the tasks of 'reading, writing, and arithmetic', to learning of an academic, educational nature and to school-type vocational training. This amounts to the 'fragmentation and insularisation' of adult education. As a result, popular education initiatives and those prompted by socio-educational associations, promoted by the

third sector (and others), remain at the margins of public policies for this sector (Lima, 2008, pp. 41ff., own translation).

With respect to learning priorities, this model stresses the development of abilities that allow the mechanical use of codes for reading and receiving messages (rather than sending them); moreover, it has a preference for 'teaching and reciting' (not for critical learning) and puts 'teaching and reading before teaching and writing'. Under this model, learning 'lets adults be able to decipher literary messages from outside rather than to encrypt their own experience in the written word'. It is thus a model that focuses on 'teaching and receiving' in which memorising is emphasised and read texts are the main source of dialogue with the reader. Sanz Fernández says that it therefore promotes 'receiving and mastering literacy'. Seeking to 'discipline the adult population' and to 'educate to obey', it advances the instrumental (not social) use of reading and writing, and the results of education practices illustrate the efforts at social control and the reproduction of social inequalities (Sanz Fernández, 2008, pp. 75ff., own translation).

In this context, the model is supported by the establishment of minimum education platforms – basic levels that everyone should reach and reproduce. So the main purpose is to plug the gaps and deal with the 'failings of learning'; basically, the model aims to 'redress, repair, or remedy more than to prepare or prevent', and thereby to promote an 'orthopaedic logic' (Correia, 1997, pp. 22ff., own translation). Based on a 'culture of minimums' (because the social demands of education for all are located on the first platform), the objectives promoted by this model are restricted to meeting basic education needs, because they favour academic and elementary conceptions of education (Sanz Fernández, 2008, pp. 80ff.), committed to the development of basic competencies and skills for social inclusion and control.

### *Formal education and vocational training at the heart of public policies*

In the European countries sharing a commitment to the welfare state, adult education takes a form that is reminiscent of the centrality of the state in the context of specific historic circumstances (cf. Guimarães, 2010). These circumstances led to some countries putting in place mechanisms for formal education (e.g. instruction and compensatory education) and non-formal education (retraining and professional adaptation, promotion of social participation, etc.) that were better structured than those seen up to the Second World War.



But there were variations. These are clear in the political ends which aimed to integrate workers into the modern state as citizens; these variations were intended to meet the expectations of the people (and their children) and guaranteed the public funding of education and training (cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990; Giddens, 1999; Law, 1998; Mishra, 1995; and others).

For example, in post-war England, public policy on adult education revealed the growing influence of the state in the indicated sectors. This influence resulted from the support given to liberal adult education and vocational training initiatives. The latter was influenced by retraining schemes for demobbed soldiers and people coming to work in industries such as metallurgy and car-making. This saw the publication of the Education Act in 1944. Under this act, the state became the most important promoter of adult education in England, through the Further Education Colleges and Local Education Authorities (cf. Merrill, 2006). These bodies were responsible for organising further education courses. The initiatives included compensatory education courses for people who had not completed basic schooling and education courses that could be taken in leisure time. They were funded, controlled, and coordinated by the state, as were vocational training courses (Field, 2001, p. 6).

The increasing intervention of the state had a major impact on the structuring of the field by favouring two sectors. The first sector involved activities organised by the Local Education Authorities, which coordinated skills acquisition and VET actions implemented by public and private bodies. In addition, those organisations promoted liberal adult education and general education, non-vocational, crafts, and physical education, as well as foreign language learning and many other courses. These activities stemmed from growing concerns with immigrants, people with disabilities, women, the unemployed, and so forth. Other initiatives involved coordinating extramural activities, such as general education and vocational training led by the Workers Educational Association, for instance (Künzel, 1990, p. 306).

VET saw literacy, education, and accelerated training courses for ex-soldiers held in factories. According to Field, many adult educators and trainers involved in these programmes had prior experience in military settings, and therefore had knowledge related to designing and developing training programmes for developing the skills best suited to the employment contexts of the day. In fact, this experience was decisive to how vocational training was conceived and developed from then on (Field, 2001, p. 6).

In post-war Germany, adult education was directed toward new goals related to *re-education for democracy*, through political education (*Politische Bildung*) promoted by community education centres, by the education centres in the *Länder*, and by foundations. Companies, faith-based organisations, and

trade unions maintained the impetus for educational formats that already prevailed (Nuissl & Pehl, 2000, p. 13). The schools, meanwhile, proposed a varied range of evening courses, lectures, courses on literature, religion, history, politics, and music, as well as the teaching of German and foreign languages, the improving of health, and so forth. They were voluntary activities and often involved people who already had some knowledge of the topics covered. On the whole, these bodies did not offer courses that led to a diploma. Despite the variety of programmes, not many workers took advantage of them. It was different for residential colleges, since the content varied in terms of the trade union, religious, economic, or social tendencies favoured by whoever ran them. Diversity also characterised the adults who took part in these initiatives; it was argued that these boarding schools helped to forge a high degree of social cohesion, because they brought together people from different social groups (Raapke, 2001, p. 188).

AE played an important part in promoting the ideas of the Enlightenment until the mid-1960s, and, as it integrated education policies, the responsibility of the state was obvious. It seems that actions run by civil society bodies in the same period saw these goals diverted, since in an increasingly more plural context, the organisations were more reliant on their ideological positions (religious and trade union, for example) (Nuissl & Pehl, 2000, p. 14).

But it was felt that the state should be responsible for stimulating a *fourth sector in the education system* – one that was stable and solid. This new sector included areas such as continuing vocational training, political education, and liberal adult education (cf. Lattke, 2008). In 1970 the state, through the national education council, sought to integrate different facets of the education system. It aimed to structure and organise *centrifugal tendencies* that were apparent in education, especially in adult education. That was when another expression emerged, continuing training (*Weiterbildung*), to describe the refounding of adult education; this expression eventually embraced continuing training, vocational retraining, and non-formal adult education (Raapke, 2001, pp. 188ff.). The older German expression for AE, *Erwachsenenbildung*, kept its association with liberal, general, civil, and political education (cf. Lattke, 2008).

From the Second World War until the early 1970s, AE in France was notable for the number and diversity of its actions; some were included in the reform of the education system, others were part of popular education and worker education, and still others were closely related to vocational training (for social promotion, training of managers and engineers, vocational retraining, and ‘recycling’ (Terrot, 2001, pp. 135ff.). Introduced as a victory for a social movement able to unite political, professional, and cultural elites



pledged to modernise the country, adult training (*formation des adultes*) was being progressively regarded as a necessity in the context of the changes in the economic, political, and cultural spheres in the *thirty glorious years* (expression commonly used in France to refer to three decades of economic growth in the industrialised world following the Second World War).

This recognition meant that specific legislation could be passed in 1971 (Law of 12 July 1971). Adult education and, more specifically, the training of adults, was a right included in the labour code which integrated the training actions linked to work. In this context, training was viewed in terms of collective beliefs, as a common good sought by diverse sectors of society, including the state, companies, and employed persons (Tanguy, 2003, p. 123).

In Sweden, after the First World War, popular education (*folkbildning*) emerged as the fundamental domain for promoting social change. As such, it was a progressive force, a *reformist project in development*, since 'the study circles have been educational arrangements which have chosen contents, forms and participants so as to promote social change' (Larsson, 1998, p. 58). But the dialectics established between popular education and Swedish society became less obvious after the Second World War. For example, since then the state has been supporting folk high schools by paying the monitors of the study circles, the teachers, and the administrative staff. It has also given scholarships to students. It should be noted that these institutions formerly enjoyed a high degree of autonomy: they could set goals, decide on the nature of the education (usually comprehensive), on teaching methods (usually active), and on the participants, who came from various social groups (though these were mostly within the working middle class), as well as on the length of the courses in general (short, medium, or long duration) (cf. Vallgård & Lima, 1985).

Meanwhile, efforts to consolidate the welfare state, reduce social problems, and increase workers' wages led to the emergence of *active social policies* as a determining factor for economic stability and the promotion of full employment. As a result, training programmes aimed at integrating people into the labour market were implemented, and the reform of adult education, according to Rubenson, ended up illustrating the influence of human capital theory (Rubenson, 2004, pp. 36ff.). Regarding the influence of human capital theory, the successive reforms in the second half of the twentieth century allowed the formal education system to expand to include more and more people. But *recurrent education* appeared, as a basic idea used to argue that everyone should enjoy equal rights with respect to education, regardless of their social origin, gender, and so forth (Rubenson, 1994, pp. 248ff.).

In Portugal, this rationale became more obvious after the Basic Law for the Education System and Portugal's membership in the European Economic

Community (EEC) in 1986. In terms of priorities, therefore, we have the return to educational guidelines and second-chance education, that is, to compensatory education. This return was confirmed by the emphasis given to evening-class recurrent education. Supplementing the endeavour to modernise the economy, this rationale downgraded issues of literacy, basic education, and popular education. These were areas of intervention seen, as far as public policies were concerned, as being generically incompatible with the idealised place and coveted status of an EU country whose main challenges were economic modernisation, understood in terms of infrastructure, the efficacy and efficiency of public and private management, increasing productivity, internationalisation, and competitiveness in the economy (cf. Lima, 2008, p. 40).

### *Education and training*

Until recently, public policies for AE set out to respond to a range of complex issues such as social equality, second-chance education/training, and skills acquisition for everyone. The agenda of lifelong learning backed by the European Union reinforces these concerns, which are based on the idea that ‘everyone is responsible for their own continuing training’ (Dubar & Gadéa, 1999, p. 131, own translation).

It has been developed in a context that values the relation between AE and social, employment, and training policies, and focuses on devices, rules, actors, viewpoints, and representations; but these developments have imposed an instrumental conception on educational actions. These aspects have influenced and been influenced by policies that put employment at the heart of the preoccupations of the education system. The emphasis on levels of qualification exemplifies yet another aspect of the instrumental nature of training, since ‘adopting education policies in terms of training levels and qualification indicates this intention, constantly reaffirmed, to establish relations of equivalence between these four different registers of social reality – that is, education, training, qualification, and employment’ (Tanguy, 2007, p. 56, own translation).

Skills, qualifications, and certificates have motivated a pedagogical model that signifies a change in educational domains. This change is linked to new managerialist assessment practices based on nomenclatures and categorisation processes that denote a division between the domains of *knowledge* and *know-how*. Tanguy can thus assert that ‘the prevalence ascribed to methodology seeks to attribute scientificity, efficacy, and equity’ to training.

Based on an instrumental rationality that has its roots in the assessment of acquisitions that occur in certain situations and express specific points of *being able to*, instruments are used that make it possible to identify such ‘magic learning’ that ought to be transferable to the corporate world. In this context, training is increasingly centred on the *validation of skills*, these being seen as capacities to undertake specific tasks in certain situations (Tanguy, 2007, p. 58, own translation). Since these capacities are deeply ingrained, they are valuable in particular contexts.

#### Text Box 4: From education to training

Education and training are thus constructed as ‘instruments and pillars of social change’. Having different orientations, education is above all regarded as a vector of a future market by the *political register*, whereas training is linked more to the *economic register*. One of several aspects covered by the semantic slide from *education* to *training* is the distinct status of these two domains that are aimed at quite separate publics, depending at which point in their life cycle they get involved in education or training. Education is steadily being seen as the privileged realm of the school; training is regarded as an activity for *other places*, particularly those connected to work and the economy. So it is an area that allows agreement between actors with very different interests. This agreement is built on social conflict, misunderstandings, on the needs of an ever more competitive economy, the importance ascribed to modernising society and establishing institutions of participation and social dialogue, in the context of trying to reduce social and political conflict. In fact, training has been taking on a more central place in a lot of countries such as France – as ‘at the same time, an instrument of root-and-branch reform in the world of work, an inspiration for change in the education apparatus, and a place where changes are produced in relations between the rulers and the ruled and, more generally, . . . as a mode of government’.

(Tanguy, 2007, p. 64, own translation)

Training seems to *be opposed* to education: it cultivates the collective good and is an instrument of political reform; it is also an active principle of corporate rationalisation and modernisation, demanded by political and economic decision-takers. But it cannot be separated from the reverse – that is, from the fact that changes in wage relations reveal the increasing vulnerability of wage earners in the labour market, where the choice of categories (young people, adults, manual workers, management) is made in its name, in various ways

(diploma, vocational qualification, validation of skills, etc.). In this context, continuing training seems *more unequal* than initial training, because it is not available to the more disadvantaged wage earners on the labour market. Training is thus largely a strategy for increasing productivity and for changing labour relations, arising from a loss of authority by management, and from the anticipation of disputes, their resolution, and negotiation. Skills are seen as fundamental because they represent knowledge, attitudes, and individual and collective motivation on the part of workers as they adapt to the company's business and its changes. This is why 'they are constantly sought, but never wholly acquired'; they are forever 'under threat and always in a situation of being gained'. More recently, training has been appreciated as a principle of action that assists workers' associations with organisational change (Tanguy, 2003, pp. 124ff., own translation) in the context of valuing the experience of individuals as workers.

### **3.4 The human resources management model**

#### *The centrality of an instrumental relation between education and work*

The most recent analytical model is linked to economic modernisation, with the production of trained workers and the management of human resources. Public policies influenced by this model embrace priorities in which an essential aspect is the promotion of 'employability, competitiveness, and economic modernisation'. Here, we find a commitment to public education as an 'instrument for producing human capital that is functionally adapted to the demands of economic growth and competitiveness' (Lima, 2008, pp. 51ff., own translation).

In this scenario, such neo-liberal policies highlight some of the state's tasks that can further be related to the earlier model with respect to a) the definition and adoption of public policies, including the definition of resources to be used and the expected outcomes; b) the existence of a system of bureaucratic state institutions that implement, control, and assess the adoption of public policies; and c) the creation of rules and procedures (which embody the compulsory nature and application of various sanctions) that allow for the application of policies (Griffin, 1999a, p. 339). But other tasks suggest the retreat of the state, in valuing government action, for example, now committed to 'building bridges' through partnerships and contracts with civil society – that is, with non-governmental organisations. With its strategic role of man-



aging the autonomy and choice of the various agents and actors involved in providing education, the state has become a fundamental agent for monitoring and controlling the conditions that facilitate the provision of new conditions for accessing and succeeding in educational offerings. The characteristics of some aspects mean that these conditions indicate the creation of a more efficient and responsible market in learning with respect to providing education (cf. Griffin, 1999b).

The withdrawal of the state is justified by the internationalisation of the economy, global competition, growing social state responsibilities, and diminishing public resources (cf. Guimarães, 2010). Despite the problems arising from an adverse economic, social, and political context, public policies favour the maintenance of redistributive principles, given that LLL remains a way of providing education and training (a function of the state) and that it embraces the concern of preserving the state's strategic ability to establish policy, albeit on an increasingly short or medium-term basis. But the state is also losing control of the purposes of education. The reduction of its ability to determine the results of these policies has become clearer, despite the efforts to regulate and the adoption of measures of enforcement (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b).

Another feature of this model is how it values the participation of individuals in education and training. Although education retains an important collective dimension, the individual acquires new responsibilities. Among these are 'learning to adapt oneself' to the changes being faced, and 'being able to choose and decide' about the best options for the social and economic transformations taking place. This is where we find education and economics drawing closer, in an appeal for greater productivity, competitiveness, and flexibility; and it is in this context that we find an understanding of education (training and learning) as an investment, with frequent analogies between training and financial capital. The priorities and goals of public policies are in line with these changes. In these policies, learners are those who 'learn throughout life' in places and at times outside the school context, and those who are 'better educated', that is, those who have spent more time at school, and are 'better trained' in terms of knowledge and skills related to the workplace. Some degree of interaction between the school and the LLL strategies outside this organisation is thus sought. Furthermore, specific education policies are privileged and aimed at certain social groups. As a result, programmes have been established to combat the various forms of social exclusion and to narrow the gap between rich and poor. Although they have different emphases, these policies are backing the maintenance of state involvement, while they denote a distance from training policy and planning and a nearness to 'government strategies' (Griffin, 1999a, p. 339).

In addition to formal education (which includes teaching and other certified methods of schooling), non-formal education has been gaining importance, as has informal education, which is linked to lessons learned from socialisation (especially secondary) and knowledge gained from experience. As this is currently a predominant model, it enables initiatives to target qualification (of human resources for certain sectors of the economy and society, with a view to producing competitive advantages in the global market, being functionally adapted to economic rationality). It is, therefore, a model that tends to subordinate education to an 'adaptive function and citizenship to a market of strictly economic freedoms for consumers' (Lima, 2008, p. 49, own translation).

With respect to conceptual elements, AE is missing as a benchmark concept. From this standpoint, certain sectors, such as continuing vocational training, are valued by including vocationalist elements designed to produce human capital. With the aim of meeting continuing training needs and trying to answer the problems created by the obsolescence of vocational knowledge, this model emphasises the continuing training of young people and adults to acquire skills, to retrain, and to be recycled (cf. Lima, 2008).

The *human resources management model* focuses on the acquisition of skills (which are not promoted in the provisions currently available in the education systems). The term *competence* may embrace a wide variety of meanings (cf. Pires, 2005; and others); here, it is taken to be something that adults should have, because it is believed that each individual must have the competence needed to gain employment. Despite its relevance, competence has been viewed as knowledge acquired by each individual from their experience in different non-formal and informal contexts. Above all, it has a utility value. It shows that individuals are able to carry out a specific task. In addition, competence has been seen as measurable ability and knowledge that has yet to be assessed and formally documented. According to Andersson and Fejes,

these fears of the future are interwoven with policy-making concerning recognition, accreditation or validation of prior knowledge and competence. Society cannot afford not 'to use' the competence individuals have already gained through earlier experiences, even if these are not formally documented. If you can find a way of measuring these experiences and documenting them, both the individual and society will gain . . . This talk constructs the competent subject. (Andersson & Fejes, 2005, p. 596)

This model also stresses improving the knowledge people already have by developing specialised expertise. This involves two complementary aspects and aims to find ways that will increase productivity and competitiveness, keeping abreast of changes in contemporary societies related to the increase



of information and importance ascribed to knowledge. Education and training target the productive sector and are viewed simultaneously as investments that can bring economic benefits to the companies that motivate the initiatives.

Consequently, according to Sanz Fernández, learning is to convert oneself 'into one of the most attractive investments for businessmen and one of the priority claims (besides pay and health) of workers'. This situation has been aggravated by the fact that the past few decades have seen the consolidation of a model of economic development and forms of production whose essential feature is the management of information and knowledge. In this scenario, 'the productivity and competitiveness of economic agents are based on their ability to process and apply knowledge effectively' (Sanz Fernández, 2008, p. 94, own translation), and training occupies a core position in labour organisations and even in negotiations with trade unions.

Though aimed at all adults, this model envisages social dualisation. This dualisation is fed by the demand for training which is influenced by working situations, particularly due to the existence of safer conditions for certain sectors of the population, a preference for actions aimed at people in higher-ranking posts, and initiatives that favour jobs in more stable companies; but it is also the outcome of the higher level of training that people now have, especially in economically developed countries. This is made clear by the fact that 'those who know more' and 'those who have most knowledge' are also the people who most seek out training and who, thanks to the current social and economic conditions, have the best opportunities for training. At the other extreme, we have people who, although most of them have been to school, are poorly qualified or are qualified for jobs that are disappearing or changing. For these people, who 'have least', public policies have been implemented where the priority is for individuals with the lowest levels of knowledge and skills to be trained sufficiently to enable them to join or remain in the labour market (Sanz Fernández, 2008, pp. 94ff.).

Interestingly, this is the model that has been recontextualising the participatory techniques of popular education, now subordinated to collaborative and team work in a working context, thereby instrumentalising and diffusing the democratic, emancipatory, and autonomous principles that underpin these processes. Backed by elitist principles of democracy, allied to the concern with economic competitiveness, gaining skills, and the management of human resources, learning as promoted by these techniques has emerged as 'neutral and apolitical'. Here, lifelong learning, associated with economic and managerial modernisation, the induction and management of human resources, changes shape because the public funds that support vocational train-

ing in a working context are linked to market principles, private management, and public choice. Targeted at ‘formativity and personal accountability’ and sometimes at ‘corroded citizenship’, this model has a very particular impact on ALE – specifically in the absence of continuous, global, and integrated public policies – because of the predominance of almost exclusive preoccupations with the management of human resources and the functional adaptation of labour to economicist priorities (cf. Lima, 2008).

### *The emergence of education for competitiveness*

This model, which sees a higher profile for forms of education directed at increasing competitiveness (cf. Guimarães, 2010), has been seen in several countries in recent times. In England, for example, according to Merrill (cf. 2008), there has been a predominantly economicist approach to adult education. In an effort to coordinate different education domains within a policy directed at developing the national economy and bringing about social change, in the mid-1980s the British government implemented policies to achieve strategic economic goals, with upskilling workers being a fundamental vector. In this context, the state had an ambiguous role. It was dirigiste and revealed strong leadership by proclaiming an interest in weakening the bonds between the state and the education services, and by strengthening ties with business. But led by the need to create a free, self-organised, and responsible market that would provide relevant education offerings, it developed strong administrative control and favoured strategies that were used to intervene in all aspects of public life. In fact, according to Künzel, this growing control seemed to serve a wider process of transformation of the state’s relations with society. This process took the form of integrating the education services of adult education into various economic sectors in an attempt to reconcile public state provision with the needs of business and economic development at local and national level. With respect to adult education, this ambiguous role allowed the state to win in economic terms while it appeared to have lost in social and culture areas (Künzel, 1990, p. 325).

Paradoxically, according to Griffin and Gray (2000), despite its ‘Cinderella status’ – less important in public education policies, and yet more relevant in terms of societies that value knowledge – adult education appears as a political subject in many documents. These documents highlight its relevance to the construction of the knowledge-based society and to training skilled labour for an ever more competitive economy. The authors note the relationship between AE and businesses, specifically by establishing partnerships,

pinpointing people's learning needs, and recognising the qualifications acquired informally. But in spite of all these emphases, the strategic conduct of the state seems to be strengthened, since its intervention consists of providing conditions for people, local communities, and companies to fulfil their educational and training responsibilities. Public financing is secured, especially for the provision of recognition of skills acquired during life, although leaving aside other educational formats (Griffin & Gray, 2000, p. 11).

In Germany, the possibility of establishing a continuing training market was discussed in 1984. It would be linked to upskilling adults with the aim of combating unemployment. Although it was not fully followed, according to Nuissl and Pehl, this discussion marked the start of the steady withdrawal of the state from AE by instituting competition between promoters of adult education, at federal and state (*Länder*) level. But even today, the *Länder* retain certain control and regulatory functions, typical of the welfare state (cf. Nuissl & Pehl, 2000).

Since then, according to Raapke (cf. 2001), though deregulation has not been complete, there have been important reductions in the financial, material, and human resources granted to adult education in Germany. These reductions were distributed unequally: in some places, AE seems to have boosted its position because some public organisations still have some budgetary independence, whereas market mechanisms seem to rule in others. But the overall responsibility of the state was reduced, and it now provides less for adult education. In fact, it is often argued that the adults themselves should take charge of their own education and training, and that state support is only justified in very special circumstances or for particular social groups. So *training for the common interest* involves tension, since the state and local authorities still control and fund some initiatives, though this is only a small part of continuing training (*Weiterbildung*). This tension is aggravated because there is actually quite a variety of public AE bodies, a situation that allows people to access educational offerings more easily; but this access is made more difficult by the rules of participation imposed (Nuissl & Pehl, 2000, p.16).

In France, until the end of the 1990s, public policies for adult training set out to respond to a range of complex issues including social equality, second-chance education/training, and qualification for everyone. As Dubar and Gadéa report, however, training has come to be seen above all as a means to reply to the employment crisis, and little time has been given to educational, social, and cultural actions. But more recent legal provisions have been adding the fight against social exclusion to training, in the context of employment policy. Economic imperatives dominate this field, which has become an

instrument to keep employed persons employable. The focus is on skills acquisition, particularly those most needed by businesses; the individualised nature of the provision is also stressed (Dubar & Gadéa, 1999, p. 131).

In Portugal, the latest policies to be adopted (e.g. adult education and training) that can be related to this model tend toward modernisation, 'so as to respond positively to the so-called *challenges* of European integration, requiring the state and public administration to make a greater structural effort and devise active policies for integration and convergence'. These concerns are not completely unknown in Portugal; even in the 1950s, the significance of modernisation and the content of measures within efforts at economic development were discussed. But once Portugal joined the EEC and adopted policies influenced by guidelines issued by this supranational body, the emphasis was on ideas such as 'useful learning', 'acquisition of skills to compete', 'lifelong qualification' and 'education for employability'. The country was asked to adopt measures that were 'instant and short term' and that preferred 'trainability' over education, and individual responsibility over social responsibility and collective destiny, as pillars of the proposed policies' (Lima, 2008, p. 46, own translation).

The recognition of learning acquired throughout life is a central issue in policy discourses in present times. This involves several risks. The Scandinavian models of the welfare state and adult education, universalist in nature and focused on employment, have faced two threats in the last two decades, according to Rubenson. The first threat concerns political discourses in which education was strengthened as long as it considered the needs of the market and individual responsibility in adapting to the challenges posed by the knowledge-based economy. In these discourses, the needs of individuals, especially those needs arising 'from the needs of the labour market', are the starting point for planning the provision of education. The second threat is linked to lifelong learning as public policy and individual project. In this context, the collective efforts of the social movements and the associations that promote the study circles, for example, are deprecated, and the traditional connection between civil society and popular education comes out weaker (Rubenson, 2004, p. 44).

This reasoning is based on the idea, popular in political discourses, that Swedish society, like those of other countries, is at risk, and that the skills of its people are important to the construction of a knowledge-based economy. Everyone should have the competencies that make them employable, and in this context, the recognition, accreditation, and validation of competencies are essential. The skills that people develop during the course of their life should be utilised. On this, Andersson and Fejes note that the validation of



competencies was introduced into the discourse and public policies in Sweden in 1996, and that this increased the chance of gaining qualifications. It also allowed education and training to develop to be more useful and relevant to people, since 'there is no need to learn what has been learned in the past'. Competence took on a new meaning, stressing its usefulness (cf. Andersson & Fejes, 2005).

In other words, there are two opposing views about adults. On the one hand, there is the view that a person who participates in formal and non-formal adult education gains competence by doing so. The authors say that 'the competent adult is constructed as an educable person', who is expected to be responsible and able to study and develop skills. According to this view, people *become able* through study and work, thereby recording a gain for society, given that these people can even find other jobs and do other things. In this scenario, it is felt that each person has an intrinsic essence that can be developed if the state offers enough support (Andersson & Fejes, 2005, pp. 601ff.). Assessment serves to single out the best, the capacity for study is seen as a *talent*, and the subject is someone who produces knowledge.

On the other hand, we have the person who wants to validate his/her competencies, particularly if they have knowledge that needs to be socially recognised and certified. This person is more independent but relies on the validation of competence to become a *competent person*. Competence is seen as the ability to do something, the ability that is developed as a result of specific, relevant individual experiences. Knowledge is acquired; it is no longer exclusively produced in the formal education system, but in other places as well. The assessment of what has been learned shifts to the assessment of the person as a whole, including what they have learned in the past. So experience counts as competence, and knowledge is valued as something that concerns a specific area. Here's what Andersson and Fejes have to say on this point:

What knowledge is construed as valuable? It is individual, specific knowledge, discussed as competence. Experience and competence are not discussed on the collective level, as in the 1970s. It is the individual who has to have the specific experience and, consequently, competence. (Andersson & Fejes, 2005, p. 607)

According to this view, a competent subject is built largely by the validation of specific life experiences. This technique will 'make a learner adult', for which an assessment is used that is quite different from that used in formal and non-formal education. The responsibility and autonomy of adults is thus acknowledged, in the context of lifelong learning (Andersson & Fejes, 2005, pp. 607ff.).

### *The recognition of learning acquired throughout life*

In the last decades, policies and practices concerning the recognition of prior learning have been developed all around the world, and especially in Europe. Recognition of learning acquired throughout life has been known by different names in the different countries in which it has been adopted, as a result of the different focuses, principles, or procedures it includes. In France, it is called VAE (*validation des acquis de l'expérience*) and VAP (*validation des acquis professionnels*), in England *accreditation of prior learning*, in Sweden *recognition of prior learning*, and in Portugal *recognition, validation and certification of competencies* (cf. Pires, 2005). In some cases, the concept of prior learning stresses the experience acquired in informal contexts, whereas in others, the procedures associated with recognition and validation are pivotal.

Within lifelong learning policies, recognition of prior learning has been considered a significant process for widening participation in adult education while creating a workforce with formally recognised transferable skills. However, in many circumstances, recognition of prior learning seems mainly to be designed to acknowledge the fact that learning happens outside formal education organisations, and to offer individuals the flexibility to accumulate recognised pieces of learning over their lifetime. Therefore, even if there is a potential for change, raising adults' motivation to join adult education initiatives, or addressing redistributive and equal opportunity issues are not serious concerns of policies that focus on individual choice and individual freedom (Pouget & Osborne, 2004, p. 61).

Even if learning is suggested in many policy discourses as containing a broad meaning, the truth is that, as Andersson and Fejes (2010, p. 203) point out, when it comes to the recognition of prior learning, it is not learning *per se* that is the focus of attention but rather the results of the process – 'that is, the formal and/or actual competence/knowledge which institutions assess in different ways, for example, through methods such as interviews, portfolios, formal tests and authentic assessment in workplaces'. Owing to this, evaluation and measurement of both competencies and qualifications became central in lifelong learning policies. For these policies, validation/accreditation of valid (institutional, marketable, and socially valuable) knowledge acquired by people in their lives, namely outside schools and relevant for professional purposes, have been instituted based on formal assessment processes, which have turned into public forms of adult education provision that have been under serious criticism (cf. Andersson & Fejes, 2010; Harris, 1999; Pouget & Osborne, 2004; among others).



Table 1: Analytical policy models for adult education (authors' own)

Rationales predominating in education policies	Democratic-emancipatory model	Modernisation and state control model	Human resources management model
<b>Dimensions</b>			
<b>Political-administrative orientations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Polycentric education systems based on participatory democracy</li> <li>* Decentralised control of policy and administration of education</li> <li>* Appreciation of bottom-up dynamics</li> <li>* Support of local, self-managed initiatives</li> <li>* Leading role of education associations and social movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Appreciation of education in the effort to modernise, encouraging efficacy, efficiency of public and private management, increasing productivity, the internationalisation of the economy and competitiveness in capitalist democracies</li> <li>* Centralised control of policy and administration of education by the state (supply-side)</li> <li>* Appreciation of state intervention as guarantee of universal, free public education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Leading role ascribed to the market, civil society, and the individual (demand-side)</li> <li>* Adoption of active policies for integration and convergence in EU context</li> <li>* Combination of logic of public service and programme logic, although the programme logic in EU-backed projects dominates</li> <li>* Promotion of partnerships between state and other institutional actors</li> </ul>
<b>Political priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Construction of a democratic and participatory society</li> <li>* Integration of basic, non-governmental groups in the definition and adoption of public policies</li> <li>* Solidarity, social justice, common good</li> <li>* Education established as a basic social right</li> <li>* Political, economic and cultural change</li> <li>* Education and training as process of empowerment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Literacy programmes and encouragement of functional literacy</li> <li>* School education as means of social control</li> <li>* Appreciation of school-based guidelines</li> <li>* Second-chance education</li> <li>* Recurrent education and evening school for adults</li> <li>* Vocational training with school influence</li> <li>* Support for formal education according to formal rules and bureaucratic processes established by the welfare state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Fostering employability, competitiveness, and economic modernisation through education and training</li> <li>* Education and training as instruments of human capital and adaptation to economic imperatives</li> <li>* Education for adaptive function; citizenship for the market of consumers' economic freedoms</li> <li>* Development of vocational training</li> <li>* Upskilling, economically valuable skills</li> <li>* Certification of knowledge acquired by experience (from school and vocational)</li> <li>* Appreciation of market logic and individual choice</li> </ul>

<b>Organisational and administrative dimensions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Appreciation of intervention of civil society (associations and community sector concerned with adult education, popular associations)</li> <li>* Local self-organisation, autonomy and creativity of bodies behind initiatives</li> <li>* Participatory forms aiming at collective decisions, i.e. participatory budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* School as central organisation in public adult education policies</li> <li>* Courses for young people and adults</li> <li>* Strongly educational administrative and management procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Adoption of managerial, procedures for induction and management of human resources</li> <li>* Appeal to non-state organisation (third sector and market) involvement</li> <li>* Partnerships</li> <li>* Creation of state management and administration structures having some independence, though with limited scope for educational intervention (minimalist structures, for induction, mediation)</li> </ul>
<b>Main conceptual elements of public policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Adult education as a sector characterised by heterogeneity and diversity</li> <li>* Appreciation of basic education, popular education, basic literacy, socio-cultural and socio-educational animation</li> <li>* Educational nature of the actions, appreciation of collective knowledge and experience</li> <li>* Ethical and political dimension of education</li> <li>* Action-research projects, participatory research</li> <li>* Basic civic education (aims at political and economic democratisation, power relations transformation, social change)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Formal education of adults as social right</li> <li>* Integration of non-formal education into the public education system according to the latter's rules</li> <li>* Education as instrument for promoting equal opportunities</li> <li>* Appreciation of vocational training (according to educational guidelines)</li> <li>* Adult education as second-chance education</li> <li>* Education for modernisation and economic development of the nation state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Vocationalism and continuing vocational training</li> <li>* Production of human capital</li> <li>* Continuing training aimed at remedying obsolescence of vocational knowledge, re-training, recycling and education for employability</li> <li>* Lifelong upskilling and acquisition of skills to compete</li> <li>* Recontextualisation of active methods and participatory techniques (e.g. collaborative work)</li> <li>* Resemanticisation of ideas such as democracy, participation, autonomy, freedom</li> <li>* Promotion of trainability and individual responsibility</li> </ul>

## Exercises and tasks

### Exercise 1

Consider the tensions between *education*, *training*, and *lifelong learning* mentioned in this chapter with respect to the public policies of various countries and write a short essay (1–2 pages) commenting critically on the following statements by Boshier (1998, pp. 5ff.):

If lifelong education was an instrument for democracy, lifelong learning is almost entirely preoccupied with the cash register.

Lifelong learning discourses render social conditions (and inequality) invisible. Predatory capitalism is unproblematised. Lifelong learning tends to be nested in an ideology of vocationalism. Learning is for acquiring skills that will enable the learner to work harder, faster and smarter and, as such, enable their employer to better compete in the global economy.

### Exercise 2

Write a short description of each of the three analytical models for ALE policies, in accordance with the proposal suggested in this chapter: *the democratic-emancipatory model*, *the modernisation and state control model*, and *the human resources management model*.

- Based on this description, try and establish the connections you think are most pertinent to each analytical model and each model described by Griffin (1999a, 1999b), as discussed in Chapter 2.
- Given the three alternative models described in Chapter 3, but also bearing in mind Griffin's proposals, characterise the various roles ascribed to the state in each model.

### Task 1

In light of the definition given for each analytical model of ALE policies, it may be concluded that they are not mutually exclusive, and that some characteristic aspects of each model may occur simultaneously.

- Start by defining the national, regional, or municipal contexts of your search and then find three different policies of ALE that can be better interpreted by each of the three analytical policy models.

- b) Choose at least one example that you consider of hybrid character and that you think may be better understood by working with at least two of the analytical policy models, pointing out the relevant aspects involved.

Explore the possible differences or the contradictions observed between official discourses (e. g. policy papers) and social practices in one of the examples given above.

## 4. The European Union: Strategies for Lifelong Learning

### 4.1 Favouring the link between economy and social cohesion

The European Union is a supranational organisation which in 2011 comprised 27 member states. It was established to provide peace, prosperity, and stability for its peoples, overcome the divisions on the continent, ensure that its peoples can live in safety, promote balanced economic and social development, meet the challenges of globalisation, and preserve the diversity of the peoples of Europe, as well as to uphold the values that Europeans share, such as sustainable development and a sound environment, respect for human rights, and the social market economy (cf. European Union, 2010a).

Of all of the European Union's goals, the ones which addressed economic development and social solidarity were of key importance. The Union's understanding of the link between the economy and social cohesion is explained on the EU website in response to Question 1, 'Why the European Union?', and in Subject Area IV, 'Economic and social solidarity', where we find the following statement.

#### **Text Box 5: The European Union**

The EU was created to achieve the political goal of peace, but its dynamism and success spring from its involvement in economics.

EU countries account for an ever smaller percentage of the world's population. They must therefore continue pulling together if they are to ensure economic growth and be able to compete on the world stage with other major economies. No individual EU country is strong enough to go it alone in world trade. The European single market provides companies with a vital platform for competing effectively on world markets.

But Europe-wide free competition must be counterbalanced by Europe-wide solidarity. This has tangible benefits for European citizens: when they fall victim to floods and other natural disasters, they receive assistance from the EU budget. The Structural Funds, managed by the European Commission, encourage and supplement the efforts of the EU's national and regional authorities to reduce inequalities between different parts of Europe. Money from the EU budget and loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) are used to improve Europe's trans-



port infrastructure (for example, to extend the network of motorways and high-speed railways), thus providing better access to outlying regions and boosting trans-European trade. The EU's economic success will be measured in part by the ability of its single market of half a billion consumers to benefit as many people and businesses as possible.

**Source:** European Union, 2010a

This effort to articulate policies and guidelines which were, simultaneously, striving for economic development and social development shaped the European Union's intervention in several areas, including adult learning and education. Particularly in the last two decades, this sector has come to be regarded as an essential pillar for the construction of a competitive economy based on knowledge and innovation, but having often been assigned an instrumental scope in relation to understanding social cohesion.

## **4.2 Adult education in the European Union**

Since its creation, the European Union has shown a growing interest in training and, more recently, in education. According to Antunes (2008, pp. 17ff., own translation), three main time frames for the adoption of education strategies can be identified: a) the beginning of the 1970s, which saw the first attempt of the European Economic Community to intervene in education; b) until the mid-1980s, during which time this effort was intensified by signing the Single European Act (1986); and c) after the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), which established the legitimacy of the Union's competence and action in education. These phases fostered the emergence and consolidation of community intervention policy for education.

Even the Treaty of Rome (1957), in Chapter 2 concerning the European Social Fund, envisaged assistance for occupational re-training to ensure productive employment (Article 125), both in terms of coordination of these initiatives and granting training benefits for unemployed adults. Moreover, Article 128 states the need for the European Commission to adopt 'general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market'. According to these references, adult education mostly pertained to lifelong vocational training, excluding a significant number of sectors which, particularly since the Second World War, were sub-

jected to public policies in European countries such as Germany, England, France, or Sweden.

Aside from the references made in the Treaty of Rome, by the 1960s and 1970s, issues related to vocational training were discussed in several meetings between ministers of education of the member states of the European Economic Community. On some of these occasions, emphasis was placed on the importance of cooperation and, in particular, the need to define a more comprehensive strategy, labelled *cultural*, aimed at constructing a *new* Europe. As Nóvoa and Lawn claimed, ‘a cultural and education strategy was produced which would begin the task of constructing Europe as a common space, and the role of education in this task is seen as a necessary step’ (2002, p. 2). At first glance, this construction could be seen as consistent with the process of European integration. However, it was still a disproportionate ambition for a supranational entity which had no political powers to define an education policy, and which only defined non-binding guidelines that the states were free to follow or not. Due to the ambiguity of its role, the European Union maintained an indirect influence on education and, specially, on adult education. In this sense, even though the Single European Act saw the creation of education and training strategies aimed also at adults (as part of the European Social Fund, through the EURYDICE, COMETT, SOCRATES, and ERASMUS Programmes, among others), in reality this was still a timid intervention.

The nature of this intervention has changed significantly over the past two decades, and there has been a new phase in the process of Europeanisation of education and training policies. Specifically since 1992, there has been ‘the development of a community policy in the field of education and the European space of education/training’ (Antunes, 2008, pp. 17ff.). The Treaty of Maastricht entailed a more significant EU intervention in areas related to education and training, as evidenced by Articles 126 and 127.

### **Text Box 6: Articles 126 and 127 of the Treaty of Maastricht**

#### **Article 126**

1. The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisations of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.
2. Community action shall be aimed at:
  - developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States;
  - encouraging mobility of students and teachers, inter alia by encouraging the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;
  - promoting cooperation between educational establishments;
  - developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States;
  - encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors;
  - encouraging the development of distance education.

#### **Article 127**

The Community shall implement a vocational training policy which shall support and supplement the action of the Member States, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content and organisation of vocational training.

1. Community action shall aim to:
  - facilitate adaptation to industrial changes, in particular through vocational training and retraining;
  - improve initial and continuing vocational training in order to facilitate vocational integration and reintegration into the labour market;
  - facilitate access to vocational training and encourage mobility of instructors and trainees and particularly young people;
  - stimulate cooperation on training between educational or training establishments and firms;
  - develop exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the training systems of the Member States.
2. The Community and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of vocational training.

**Source:** Treaty of Maastricht (1992)

In addition, EU intervention in education and training has always been conditional on the *principle of subsidiarity*. Due to this principle, the states maintained a high level of autonomy in the field of education. It was the Union's job to intervene in areas related mostly to non-formal education and training, as well as informal education, for example through the recognition of prior learning acquired throughout life. On the subsidiarity principle, Article 5 of the consolidated version of the Treaty establishing the European Community stated the following.

**Text Box 7: The principle of subsidiarity**

The Community shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by this Treaty and the objectives assigned to it therein.

In areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved by the Community.

Any action by the Community shall not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives of this Treaty.

**Source:** *Official Journal of the European Communities* C 325 of December 2002

In 1997, Articles 149 and 150 of the Treaty of Amsterdam provided another step for the creation of a European strategy for education and training. This Treaty outlined the creation of new actions and the restructuring of already established education programmes. This restructuring consolidated a tendency observed during the 1990s for the specific case of AE. Even though the resources attributed specifically to actions aimed at this sector were not substantial, when compared with many others, there was in fact a higher frequency of references to this field in political documents, and a timid increase in means and allocations granted.

Additionally, at the 1997 Luxembourg Summit and at the 1998 Vienna Summit, issues such as training and education were discussed within the scope of defining social and employment policies. These two meetings contributed to the adoption of an integrated action based on education, training, employment, increased competitiveness, and social cohesion. This action comprised four goals:

**Keywords:** Employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability, and equal opportunities

- **Employability:** combating long-term unemployment and youth unemployment, modernising education and training systems, active monitoring of the unemployed by offering them a new start in the field of training or employment (before reaching six months unemployment for every unemployed young person and 12 months for every unemployed adult), reducing the numbers dropping out of education system early by 50% and deciding on a framework agreement between employers and the social partners on how to open workplaces across Europe for training and work practice;
- **Entrepreneurship:** establishing clear, stable and predictable rules concerning the start-up and running of businesses and the simplification of administrative burdens on small and medium size enterprises (SMEs). The strategy proposes significantly reducing the overhead costs for enterprises of hiring an additional worker, facilitating easier transition to self-employment and the setting up of micro-enterprises, the development of the markets for venture capital in order to facilitate the financing of SMEs, and the reduction on tax burdens on employment before 2000;
- **Adaptability:** modernising work organisation and flexibility or working arrangements and putting in place of a framework for more adaptable forms of contracts, renewal of skills levels within enterprises by removing fiscal barriers and mobilisation of State aid policies on upgrading the labour force, creation of sustainable jobs and efficiently functioning labour markets;
- **Equal opportunities:** combating the gender gap and supporting the increased employment of women, by implementing policies on career breaks, parental leave, part-time work, and good quality care for children. The European Employment Strategy also proposes that Member States facilitate return to work, in particular for women.

**Source:** European Union, 2010b

Following through on guidelines on employment agreed upon by the member states, education and training became essential routes for the European Employment Strategy. From this perspective, the analysis of political documents produced by the European Union establishes that these included guidelines that reinforced the connection between education, in a general sense, and work, through employment policies. Simultaneously, the guidelines related to the construction of a European space for education of a cultural nature, despite being put forward in several texts, lost importance in light of the value put on the development of the economy and the increase in competitiveness.



From this point of view, the Union's strategy for education and training was being consolidated in an atmosphere of strong criticism of national education systems. A clear example of this effort became evident in a document called *White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The problems underlined in this text included unemployment, social exclusion, and the lack of mobility within the European territory. An increasingly complex scenario was described from the economic, social, and political points of view. In this scenario, education and training seemed to take on new roles in the development of a knowledge-based society, in the promotion of competencies for employment, and in the development of the economy, taking into account the existence of more critical and creative citizens and workers (cf. European Commission, 1994).

Published the following year, the *White Paper on Education and Training: Teaching and Learning/Towards the Learning Society* appealed to the importance of education, training, and, most of all, learning for the emergence of the knowledge-based society, and for employment. The development and dissemination of scientific knowledge and technology and the globalisation of the economy were also acknowledged. This document highlighted the fact that these were times characterised by rapid changes in the economy. In this environment, individuals should adapt, be flexible and innovative, in the context of the construction of the European social model. For this, education and training had an essential role. This White Paper was based on the following objectives: narrowing the gap between educational organisations and businesses, fighting against social exclusion, and promoting languages, as well as controlling and assessing EU funding programmes that concerned education, training, and learning, which were seen as investments that would impact on the economy (European Commission, 1995, pp. 23ff.).

The growing relevance of education, training, and learning in political documents became more evident with the celebration of the *European Year of Lifelong Learning* in 1996. This initiative had more specific objectives than those that could be found in the aforementioned documents, because it sought to

- inform the states and Europeans and raise awareness on the importance of this idea
- develop cooperation between public structures and the various entities (for example, small and medium businesses) which promoted education and training activities

- foster the creation of a European space for education and training, therefore resorting to the acknowledgement of professional qualifications
- enable education and training to become strategies for the promotion of equal opportunities.

Around this time, there was an appeal for the dissemination of information on the quality of education and professional qualifications, for the incentive to individuals' motivations for lifelong learning, for the cooperation between educational and training institutions and work organisations, for increasing the awareness of social partners and local communities, as well as the necessary construction of a European space for education (cf. European Parliament & European Council, 1995).

Along with the developments concerning training, the construction of a *common space for education* gained some notoriety in EU political documents. In reality, it was an important step towards the construction of a region in which lifelong education, training, and learning guided the definition and adoption of policies that were not exclusively related to employment and work (Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002, pp. 2ff.). In conjunction with this somewhat discursive concern, there was also an increase in financial means and resources attributed to measures that enabled this objective to be met. However, representation of this space was still not very consistent because, among other reasons, diversity tainted the educational systems of the countries that made up the European Union, and the principle of subsidiarity was a prevailing aspect which inhibited the construction of an EU education policy.

For these reasons, as Griffin (cf. 1999a, 1999b) suggested, in a complex European setting, a number of documents and events favoured defining an *education strategy* rather than an education policy. Within this strategy, the purpose of education focused mainly on aspects concerning economic development with an instrumental theory of social cohesion.

To confirm the importance of this strategy, several studies identified a *silent explosion* in adult participation in lifelong vocational training activities in advanced capitalist countries (see e.g. Bélanger & Federighi, 2000; Field, 2006). This fact would enable a prioritisation of a certain degree of understanding of AE on the political agenda of the European Union. This understanding was dependent on transformations of the productive model economic which was meanwhile adopted. These changes suggested the need to promote lifelong vocational training activities. Additionally, since the majority of the population in many European countries had received a basic education during childhood and youth, adult education was strongly associated with solutions for contemporary work challenges (cf. Sanz Fernández, 2008).

Following this reasoning, as will be demonstrated next, lifelong learning, as a *strategy*, fit within a human capital framework. In this context, it was maintained that increased productivity and competitiveness were directly related to the levels of workers' training (not education). Yet, contrary to training activities focused on basic education, and contrary to the initial vocational training or professional re-training programmes that were implemented in many European countries immediately after the Second World War, it was lifelong learning, particularly learning that resulted from workers' experience in work organisations, which was emphasised in EU guidelines.

### 4.3 The Lisbon Strategy

The *Lisbon Strategy* had the objective of constructing the most dynamic and competitive economy in the world by 2010, based on knowledge and, simultaneously, capable of guaranteeing a sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. This objective drew on the conviction that the globalisation of the economy and the growing importance placed on information and communication technologies demanded a reform of European educational systems. In this sense, it was necessary to look for mechanisms that guaranteed access to LLL in order to find strategies to solve structural unemployment. Through the Lisbon Strategy, the European Union tried to argue that adapting and reinforcing existing economic development processes for creating jobs and greater social cohesion was an effort that should be backed by a more ambitious intervention than the one put into practice thus far (cf. Lisbon European Council, 2000), namely in areas such as education and training.

To achieve the proposed objectives and to guarantee the quality of governmental efficiency, 'a global and integrated strategy for action' was designed. This strategy was aimed at the transition to an economy and a society based on knowledge, as well as at accelerating the process of a structural reform which would foster an increase in competitiveness and promote innovation and the consolidation of the European internal market. In terms of achieving social cohesion, this endeavour veered towards the modernisation of the *European social model*.

#### Text Box 8: The welfare state in a process of redefinition

Mendes (cf. 1998) argued that Europe never existed as a unique and singular reality. In fact, since the creation of the EEC, there have been a number of experiments related to the welfare state, marked by some common intervention patterns, but with important differentiating lines. For this reason, the European social model has always harked back to a mythical dimension of the debate on public policies, turning the heart of the discussion to cognitive and ideological representations regarding the intervention of the state. The economic and social transformations of the last three decades, along with their repercussions on public policies and on social security systems, encouraged the existence of a *welfare state in transition* associated with the European social model. Some voices, of neo-liberal persuasion, have always been opposed to said model. But there was political consensus on the need for this kind of model, owing to the shared definition of citizenship (with respect to social, civic, political, and social rights) and identity (a feeling created by belonging to a specific national and supranational community) which the various states advocated. Therefore, in the European Union, although the appeals were fairly weak, the idea remained that integration, social cohesion, and more committed citizenship were essential. According to this line of thought, action and financing instruments that overcame the limits of the nation state were adopted, as occurred with structural funds.

Even though it was not clear whether the European social model proposed in the political documents was similar to social security models adopted by countries such as France, Germany, or Sweden, in reality there seemed to be a search for solutions that would help overcome the difficulties that the social security systems were presenting in many European countries. Considering these difficulties, it was evident that the construction of this model had to contemplate the fight against social exclusion, even if through the creation of several sectoral and non-universal support programmes, contrary to what was proposed by the welfare state. This model would also entail economic principles based on growth and macro policies, which would lead, for example, to full employment. Meanwhile, it was maintained that individuals should be committed to re-building an *active and dynamic welfare state* which would not aggravate existing social problems with regards to unemployment, social exclusion, and poverty (cf. Lisbon European Council, 2000).

The appeal of this model must be commended when considering that the last few decades have seen an increase in economic disparity, social exclusion, and the redundancy of the poor, according to Field (2006, pp. 113ff.).



The oil crisis, the transformations of the capitalist system, which has since then been assumedly internationalised, globalisation, as well as a changeable economic, social, and political setting, led to the retraction of the welfare state and the redefining of policies that, in the past, were focused on social justice and equal opportunities. This *new* social state,

arguably the crowning achievement of the long history of European democracy and until recently its dominant form, is today in retreat. It was born and entrenched as an internal, small-scale supplement to the global, external and extensive 'waste disposal-and-recycling' industry. It was conceived as such a supplement and designed to deal effectively with the task all supplements are meant to deal with: with the residual issues left after the principal industrial establishments have done their job. More concretely, it was supposed to mop up the manageable volume of 'human waste' left after 'global' solutions had been tried. (Bauman, 2005a, p. 23)

Even in more economically developed western countries, the absence of a strong political commitment with regards to aspects of a social and educational nature, apparent in the referenced documents, contributed to an increase in the number of individuals at a *loss*, people who belong to social *subclasses*, 'without a voice or possibility to oppose' (cf. Bauman, 2005a). According to Steele and Taylor (2005, p. 95), the situation that these people were in highlighted the progressive erosion of the processes of social justice and equal opportunities.

Moreover, the focus on certain social groups, namely those that showed more difficulty in entering the job market, is an obvious example of this. The aforementioned social problems demonstrated that the main priorities of the European Union were centred on identifying the differences and specificities of these individuals included in *priority target-groups* or *underprivileged groups*. Here, there was a structural difference with the policies attributed to the welfare state. These policies had the goal of promoting full employment, social justice, and equality for all, and education and training were the processes that comprised their essential objectives, such as increasing educational access and success and, ultimately, encouraging professional and social mobility. Contrary to these social democratic guidelines, the Lisbon Strategy foresaw 'active social sectoral policies' that contemplated 'remedial', 'palliative', and 'orthopaedic' education and training initiatives, in the words of Correia (1997, p. 22ff., own translation). These initiatives converged into what Martin considered a 'therapeutic tendency', targeted to help and support people, particularly the most underprivileged and marginalised. These individuals were mostly those who could not handle the changes they faced, who had lost their self-esteem and who felt 'demoralised', because they no longer believed in democratic values and social justice (Martin, 2006, p. 17).



Additionally, the proposals associated with the European social model suggested innovations in the European political systems which included, for example, the introduction of the *open method of coordination* in sectors like education. Opting for this method resulted from the need to follow the changes that occurred in the most effective way possible. It was thought that this method had, through the identification of *best practices* and the assessment of results ascertained from a set of quantitative indicators, the possibility to contribute to the creation of jobs and social cohesion in a society which is increasingly more computerised (cf. Lisbon European Council, 2000).

**Keyword: The open method of coordination**

The open method of coordination is intended to identify and disseminate best practices in the economic, social, and educational arenas; moreover, it should create benchmarks to promote the convergence of actions and results in the European Union, according to the main objectives established by this entity and, specifically, those included in the Lisbon Strategy. On this issue, the Lisbon European Council states:

37. Implementation of the strategic goal will be facilitated by applying a new open method of coordination as the means of spreading best practices and achieving greater convergence towards the main EU goals. This method, which is designed to help Member States to develop their own policies, involves:

- fixing guidelines for the Union combined with specific timetables for achieving the goals which they set in the short, medium and long term;
- establishing, where appropriate, quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks against the best in the world and tailored to the needs of different Member States and sectors as a means of comparing best practices;
- translating these European guidelines into national and regional policies by setting specific targets and adopting measures, taking into account national and regional differences;
- periodic monitoring, evaluation and peer review organised as mutual learning processes.

38. A fully decentralised approach will be applied in line with the principle of subsidiarity in which the Union, the Member States, the regional and local levels, as well as the social partners and civil society, will be actively involved, using variable forms of partnership. A method of benchmarking best practices on managing change will be devised by the European Commission networking with different providers and users, namely the social partners, companies and NGOs.

**Source:** Lisbon European Council, 2000

According to Antunes, this method excludes the imposition ‘of goals and the definition of concrete measures to be achieved’. At the same time, it was based on a political commitment between the states and their autonomy in re-

lation to the execution of the agreed objectives. As a result, this method of coordination required the creation of structures which would be capable of defining control parameters and indicators of the achieved results, in an effort of rationalisation and coding, of a technical-administrative nature. Therefore, even if the Union did not have European policies for sectors such as education and training, the work carried out in this area consisted in a significant investment in 'the construction of a process of supranational regulation of national policies for education and training' (Antunes, 2008, p. 25, own translation).

Alongside this innovation, there was obvious support for the construction of an internal liberalised, complete, and fully operational market, an ambition that contrasted with the most pressing goals of the welfare state. Upon first analysis, this intent seemed secondary to the issues connected to education. However, it became relevant since aspects concerning the structuring of provision were contingent on it with regard to conception, organisation, development, follow up, and assessment. Discourse in this area revealed the adequacy of the *human resources management model*. It was suggested that the state withdrew in the provision of education, while, simultaneously, the possibility of its expansion in fields related to the control and (direct or indirect) assessment of initiatives carried out was predicted. It was also decided to transfer decisions to other levels of administration and management, particularly local, a key aspect in the *human resources management model*. Meanwhile, though it was claimed that 'the markets were fallible' and that, for this reason, there were growing concerns with the fact that many social groups did not participate in social and economic life, the aforementioned supranational effort proposed new policies where the market played a central role and, at the same time, where individual responsibilities were greater. These principles sought the construction of efficient and transparent financial markets that fostered economic growth, innovative and sustainable employment, as well as research, specifically through the use of information and communication technologies. This intention accompanied a need to simplify economic processes in order to limit regulation of certain areas and reduce the intervention of the state. In this case, protectionist measures on national and regional levels were particularly inadvisable.

In reality, these EU guidelines seemed to point to the defining of *transition policies*. According to Bélanger and Federighi (cf. 2000), these policies combined characteristics of the *modernisation and state control model*, apparent, for instance, in the weight given to formal education and training as strategies for social cohesion, with other aspects in line with the *human resources management model*, such as the case of active employment policies

and the processes of social and educational dualisation which resulted from it (cf. Sanz Fernández, 2008). In essence, the guidelines of the Lisbon Strategy focused on the need to rehabilitate core principles of the welfare state, such as social justice and equality, as well as ensure the intervention of the state in several social arenas, for example, the construction of a European social model which served all EU countries, even those that had never constructed a Keynesian-type system of social welfare. However, these were also guidelines that foresaw an increase of the Union's intervention in areas that, in the past, were the sole responsibility of the nation state. This proposal, despite highlighting the importance of other actors in education and training for the decentralisation and preservation of national and regional educational specificities, appeared as a solution that contradicted the diversity of social and educational responses established by nation states, local communities, and individuals.

These tensions were also evident in the established goals. In the Lisbon Strategy, lifelong education, training, and learning, in combination with employment and the knowledge-based society, took centre stage. The focus was on several areas. One entailed 'the reform of education and training systems', which, as has been mentioned, had to be directed at valuing learning as a result of the demands of an economy of more qualified workers in job markets that were geared more to innovation, technology, and research. Despite the interest, it was a clear appeal to the development of sectoral policies, aimed at young people, the unemployed, and employed people who were at risk of seeing their skills outdated by the speed of technological advances. Achieving this appeal required the creation of local learning centres, equipped with information and communication technologies and access to the Internet, enabling *basic competencies* related to these technologies to be acquired, along with others that were deemed relevant for the construction of the knowledge-based society. Greater transparency of qualifications was another key aspect, where the need to find mechanisms that encouraged certificates to be acknowledged on a European level was very clear, for instance through a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) (cf. Lisbon European Council, 2000).

In terms of these goals, there are very distinct aspects to be considered. On the one hand, this discourse clearly focused on the institutionalisation of lifelong learning as an educational strategy, guided towards the reform of educational and training systems. Since there was no indication of goals other than the ones concerning economic competitiveness and greater social cohesion, measured by the employability of individuals and the jobs created, references to education, training, and learning were essentially consigned to

more effective and efficient processes and procedures. To balance the institutionalising of lifelong learning, there was an appeal for the dis-institutionalisation of education through recognising the value of learning and skills (useful for work and for innovations to be introduced into work organisations), and through certifying experiences with economic and professional value. On the other hand, the importance attributed to education in inserting and maintaining individuals in the job market, increasing worker employability and flexibility, along with the productivity and competitiveness of businesses served the purpose of promoting adult education as an essential sector for social and employment policies, instrumentalising this field for the development of the economy.

As a result, the importance of education, training, and learning was now associated with the development of *active employment policies* (for example, *workfare* policies) for which, again, the ranking means fostered by the open method of coordination was essential. In this field, two key areas were predominantly emphasised in the chapter 'More and better jobs for Europe: developing an active employment policy', specifically

- improving employability and reducing skills gaps, in particular by providing employment services with a Europe-wide data base on jobs and learning opportunities; promoting special programmes to enable unemployed people to fill skill gaps;
- giving higher priority to lifelong learning as a basic component of the European social model, including by encouraging agreements between social partners on innovation and lifelong learning; by exploiting the complementarity between lifelong learning and adaptability through flexible management of working time and job rotation; and by introducing a European award for particularly progressive firms. Progress towards these goals should be benchmarked. (Lisbon European Council, 2000)

In addition, the Lisbon Strategy highlighted the concern for developing strategic partnerships with the private sector, which would assure the necessary means to pursue the defined objectives. Creating networks that included public and private entities was a characteristic of the *human resources management model*. The European Union took on an inductor role, by creating an effective framework for the mobilisation of all resources available for the transition to a knowledge-based economy. This framework involved financing, making it possible to resort to the European Bank of Investment. According to this line of thought, the Union and the states should define a set of procedures that encouraged the construction of a European education space through the identification of basic skills, specially related to information and communication technologies, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurial spirit, and social skills. Certification procedures were the responsibility of these actors too. The Union also had the task of encouraging the



mobility of students, teachers, educators, trainers, and researchers, a job that commanded greater transparency in recognising qualifications. Due to the mobility of resources that was required, these tasks attributed to the European Union and the member states should be shared between the public sector and the private sector. It was also stated in this document, in the chapter on 'Mobilising the necessary means', that

achieving the new strategic goal will rely primarily on the private sector, as well as on public-private partnerships. It will depend on mobilising the resources available on the markets, as well as on efforts by Member States. The Union's role is to act as a catalyst in this process, by establishing an effective framework for mobilising all available resources for the transition to the knowledge-based economy and by adding its own contribution to this effort under existing Community policies while respecting Agenda 2000. (Lisbon European Council, 2000, para 41)

The role of the European Union and the member states in achieving these guidelines for AE was clear. The Union was a *platform* which, in conjunction with each state, enabled the market to play an important role. It further took on the responsibility of skill acquisition, mobility, and innovation through education and training systems. There was therefore an important symbolic and effective shift with regards to policies for the *modernisation and state control model*, which had the state (nation state and welfare state) as a central actor. In Lawn's opinion, this shift was related to stimulating cooperation in fields such as education to shape an even more significant European identity and train the workforce in the new knowledge-based economy (cf. Lawn, 2002, p. 20). Simultaneously, these changes pointed to the predominance of the *human resources management model*. From this perspective, education, tainted by the control measures that characterised the nation state, lost consistency. Education was viewed as a *new* space, built in the image of strategies from the past, but supported by other more open processes, by influences that could be attributed to non-state and non-public organisations which pointed to the construction of supranational agendas, to human resources management, and to education strategies for competitiveness (cf. Guimarães, 2010). As Lawn argued in relation to education:

The space can be described as fluid, heterogeneous and polymorphic, yet it is recognisably a new space. It exists within the daily work of teachers and policy-makers, within shared regulations and funded projects, within curriculum networks and pupil assignments, and in city collaboration and university pressure groups. Just because it exists within a space without boundaries does not mean it does not exist. Its antecedents existed within the nation's boundaries and were not self-conscious. When the space exists within transnational governance, networks and partnerships and outside the old national and local ways, it becomes more opaque and at the same time more obvious. (Lawn, 2002, p. 20)



For all these reasons, in the Lisbon Strategy, and in all political documents produced by the European Union from here on, the use of the phrase *lifelong learning* (rather than education or even training) was preferred. In fact, LLL was better suited to the re-defined role of the state in adult education put forward by the Union, specifically as regards the growing accountability of individuals for their choices in education and training within the scope of international agendas and the appeal for their intervention in work contexts, in favour of innovation, increased productivity, and competitiveness.

Owing to this shift, for many authors LLL caused controversy because of the divisions that it created among the sectors with greater tradition in the field of AE. Some strongly criticised this change and claimed that

these ways of understanding lifelong learning may be controversial and divisive for traditional parts of the education system including the teaching profession, schools and universities in most countries, much less so for most adult educators. What is controversial and philosophically objectionable, even repugnant, to many steeped in the values and tradition of European adult education, is the tendency for lifelong learning, as they see it, to be co-opted to serve liberal economics and global free trade market. So deeply is this seen to affront the values of the Enlightenment, of active participatory citizenship and of equity, that a vigorous part of the surviving adult education movement will have nothing to do with the newer term. In terms of global politics, this controversy about meaning, and about the use or abuse of *lifelong learning*, is also a manifestation of differences about 'old and new', and about 'social Europe'. (European Association of Education for Adults, 2006, p. 6)

This change was reinforced by the appeals for governance and the principles of the new *public management in education* (cf. Power & Whitty, 1997), with regards to efficacy and efficiency, planning, and control. Since they were more congruent with the principles shared by the private sector, these favoured indicators obtained through the application of the open method of coordination and the results obtained by organisations that promoted adult education activities. It was therefore a matter of designing an AE *strategy*, which emphasised the means, while a preference for a clear policy on intended goals and outcomes was underestimated. Concerns with valuing and acknowledging other contexts, modalities, and educational and training moments, as well as a greater importance given to learning were telling of this tendency. In this sense, emphasis was no longer on references to (lifelong) education, but on (lifelong) learning, framed by the erosion of the welfare state, globalisation, and structural unemployment, among others. According to this view, the guidelines proposed by the European Union underlined the individual's participation in the knowledge-based society, namely in contexts related to work, fostering the instrumentalisation of this sector in terms of economic goals, the needs of the job market, the control and assessment im-

peratives. These guidelines further highlighted the individualisation of education and training routes and the resulting de-politicisation of adult education.

#### 4.4 The *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*

The *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000) was an important attempt at establishing a 'global policy consensus' (Field, 2006, pp. 11ff.), by explaining how the European Union came to view issues related to education, training, and learning in the context of guidelines for the management of human resources. This document set the specific background characterised by the social and economic transformations in progress. Two objectives guided the text: the dynamisation of the active citizen and the promotion of employability. These objectives converged in social and education policies that combined the participation of people in all spheres of social and economic life, the construction of a sense of belonging to a society, the establishment of methods of inclusion with respect to employability, and the ability to secure a job and keep it. Following the key ideas laid out in the Lisbon Strategy, the *Memorandum* stressed that these were crucial conditions for building a European area of education and a society in which jobs, competitiveness, and European prosperity in the knowledge-based economy were core aspects (cf. European Commission, 2000).

A reversal of one of the central tasks of the state could be noted here, with respect to the *modernisation and state control model*. As mentioned, the welfare state foresaw intervention in the economy in order to ensure full employment. In a context of economic growth, this purpose was supplemented by the adoption of universal redistributive policies. Contrary to the principles of the welfare state, since the scenario was one of globalisation, unemployment, and state withdrawal in several domains, it was argued that people had to make themselves employable and guarantee their jobs. People were, in fact, essential to increasing the European Union's competitiveness and prosperity. So whereas policies in the past sought to make education a social right, assigning it a conspicuously educational and cultural role, lately the focus has been to see experience and the knowledge gained from it as powerful instruments of social and employment policy. It was in a specific and demanding scenario that people were regarded as 'the main triumph of Europe', which should be the policies' point of reference (European Commission, 2000, p. 6).

This shifting of state functions to the individual may not be unrelated to the changes that occurred at work and the growing appreciation of knowledge

and innovation in production. There was a perceptible increase in the responsibility of the individual, and higher value was placed on their independence. Work began to require flexibility, adaptability, and new knowledge and skills of workers. Such knowledge and skills led to a *new division of labour* in which *networking* took over from the hierarchy system, and to greater participation in productive processes, innovation, and the acquisition of *multidisciplinary skills* (cf. Boltanski & Chiapello, 2000). Learning, the application of new skills to productive processes, and training directly related to the tasks on hand were appreciated, especially if they led to higher productivity. The workplace was thus viewed as a good place to learn and share knowledge and to develop skills likely to foster continuing improvement in the quality of goods and services (Field, 2006, pp. 81ff.).

But these changes involved other aspects that were related to a worsening of inequality at work, within organisations, and in society as a whole. Many authors believe that contemporary society contained within it dynamics that engendered complex processes. These dynamics were related to the changes that caused the 'social and technical division of labour' (cf. Castells, 2007a, 2007b, own translation) and the 'dualisation of employees, like that of adults undergoing education and training' (Fernández, 2006, pp. 90ff., own translation). By valuing people's intellectual and cognitive abilities (i.e. education, training, and learning), these processes amounted to a strategy of differentiation and social and vocational exclusion (Esping-Andersen, 2001, pp. 115ff.).

Despite the importance of the changes in how knowledge was produced and disseminated, the introduction of scientific and technological innovation, and the changes related to labour and its relation with education, the European Union persisted with the alliance, albeit a weak one, of education and employability. Contrary to what happened in some countries in the 1960s and 1970s, the EU discourse in the *Memorandum* presented a proposal that appeared to be based on *consensus* and the *lack of debate* or *denial of critical thought* when it came to discussing the social and educational inequality that prevailed in many countries. This led to the adoption of measures that clearly lacked an end. The end used to be at the heart of education policy, but the emphasis was now on means, and the focus was on the determination of people to change. The *Memorandum* makes no mention of political, social, and cultural principles and values with which education may be linked; on the contrary, it focuses on economicist and procedural aspects in which skills/competencies are particularly relevant. It therefore summarises some of the tensions of the political discourse of this supranational authority with respect to education. The ambiguous interest in training independent, democratic citizens is shown in the excessive preoccupation with economic devel-

opment. There were other tensions, too, related to the relationship that nation states had with the different public and private actors involved in education which invigorated education, training, and learning initiatives locally. These were tensions that resulted from the quite distinct interests and needs of the actors. So it can be concluded that the debate on LLE fostered by UNESCO in the 1970s, and the one in academia on learning and education had an essentially ‘political’ and ‘philosophical’ content, as Canário said, whereas the argument that supported LLL in the *Memorandum* was based on three categories of argument: ‘technological evolution’, ‘productive efficacy’, and ‘social cohesion’ (Canário, 2001b, pp. 48ff.).

A clear example of this could be found in the ends proposed by the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*:

**Keyword: Ends of lifelong learning**

- guarantee universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge-based society;
- visibly raise levels of investment in human resources in order to place priority on Europe’s most important asset – its people;
- develop effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for the continuum of lifelong and lifewide learning;
- significantly improve the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning;
- ensure that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives;
- provide lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible, in their own communities and supported through ICT-based facilities wherever appropriate.

**Source:** European Commission, 2000, p. 4

To achieve these ends, the document returns to the classification of educational formats used years before by UNESCO, adapting it to the European Union’s political purposes. Three kinds of learning were noted: formal, non-formal, and informal, as defined below.



**Keywords: Formal, non-formal, and informal learning**

- **Formal learning** takes place in education and training institutions, leading to recognised diplomas and qualifications.
- **Non-formal learning** takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates. Non-formal learning may be provided in the workplace and through the activities of civil society organisations and groups (such as youth organisations, trade unions and political parties). It can also be provided through organisations or services that have been set up to complement formal systems (such as arts, music and sports classes or private tutoring to prepare for examinations).
- **Informal learning** is a natural accompaniment to everyday life. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not necessarily intentional learning, and so may well not be recognised even by individuals themselves as contributing to their knowledge and skills.

**Source:** European Commission, 2000, p. 9

These definitions show the importance ascribed to the complementarity of the various modes of education: teaching, training, and learning. They also clarify the relevance of this complementarity in an education strategy that was closely engaged with the economic and employment policy evident in the key messages of the *Memorandum*.

**Keyword: Key messages of the *Memorandum***

**Key message 1:** the acquisition of new basic skills for all valuable for the labour market, at work, and for social life in general, with the objective of guaranteeing universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge-based society.

**Key message 2:** the promotion of more investment in human resources, with the objective of visibly raising levels of investment in human resources in order to place priority on Europe's most important asset – its people.

**Key message 3:** the implementation of innovation in teaching and learning, with the objective of developing effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for the continuum of lifelong and life-wide learning.



**Key message 4:** the valuing of learning, with the objective of significantly improving the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning.

**Key message 5:** the rethinking of guidance and counselling, with the objective of ensuring that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives.

**Key message 6:** the bringing learning closer to home, with the objective of providing lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible, in their own communities and supported through ICT-based facilities wherever appropriate.

**Source:** European Commission, 2000

These messages were interesting but, like the guidance generally proposed for LLL, they embodied a basic contradiction. They reinforced individual freedom and the participation of the individual in society, and yet they tallied with the European Union's economic and political goals that favoured competitiveness and the employability and adaptability of the labour force. This contradiction deepened when it came to looking at the agents and their responsibilities. By recognising that everyone learned in varied contexts and through a range of methods, learning was democratised (cf. Alheit & Dausien, 2002). But instead of developing collective forms of education intent on the achievement of a right, to social emancipation and to people, civil society, and the state taking responsibility for the paths they take, the intention of learning stressed the accountability of the individual, particularly with respect to cost of education and training. It thus concerned the individualisation of responsibility for education, which would lead adults to see education as a duty, a route for their need to be informed and employable, a sort of biographical answer to structural problems.

From this angle, Rubenson alleged that a core aspect of the EU guidance was that learning is an individual project, given that it was 'a responsibility of individuals to make use of education offerings that would create and maintain its human capital' (Rubenson, 2004, p. 34). Investment in and funding of learning were also presented as the responsibility of the individual since, according to Giddens, 'there are no rights without responsibilities' (cf. Giddens, 2000, p. 52). So, supported by a new relation between capital, labour, and education, state intervention came to be guided by the need for individuals to be accountable for their choices. This is the context in which the *Memorandum* placed the individual at the centre. For this reason, LLL had to aim

- to build an inclusive society which offers equal opportunities for access to quality learning throughout life to all people, and in which education and training provision is based first and foremost on the needs and demands of individuals;
- to adjust the ways in which education and training is provided, and how paid working life is organised, so that people can participate in learning throughout their lives and can plan for themselves how they combine learning, working and family life;
- to achieve higher overall levels of education and qualification in all sectors, to ensure high-quality provision of education and training, and at the same time to ensure that people's knowledge and skills match the changing demands of jobs and occupations, workplace organisation and working methods; and
- to encourage and equip people to participate more actively once more in all spheres of modern life, especially in social and political life at all levels of the community, including at European level. (European Commission, 2000, pp. 4ff.)

In fact, people were seen as the main actors in the knowledge-based societies and the individualisation of education through learning especially showed the importance ascribed to new spaces and times for education, no longer necessarily focused on schools, nor organised or funded by the state. It should be noted that lifelong learning thus embraced 'new educational and social policies' and 'a new economy' (p. 8). There was a strong appeal to a new balance between people's rights and responsibilities and the tasks for which public state bodies were responsible. People, seen as better able (or forced) to take decisions, should shoulder their responsibilities for education, training, and learning (p. 10). The same document has this to say:

People will only plan for consistent learning activities throughout their lives if they *want* to learn. They will not want to continue to learn if their experiences of learning in early life have been unsuccessful and personally negative. They will not want to carry on if appropriate learning opportunities are not practically accessible as far as timing, place, location and affordability are concerned. They will not feel motivated to take part in learning whose content and methods do not take proper account of their cultural perspectives and life experiences. And they will not want to invest time, effort and money in further learning if the knowledge, skills and expertise they have already acquired are not recognised in tangible ways, whether for personal reasons or for getting ahead at work. Individual motivation to learn and a variety of learning opportunities are the ultimate keys to implementing lifelong learning successfully. (p. 8)

All this led Alheit and Dausien to say that LLL 'instrumentalised' education by fitting adults to social contexts, labour market conditions, and changes in society at the same time that it was set on 'emancipation centred on the individual', following an educationalist approach to the conditions and opportunities for biographic learning (Alheit & Dausien, 2002, p. 5).

The focus on the individual also favoured another contradiction in EU guidance. Although the European Union was producing a wide range of docu-

ments related to lifelong learning, it failed to establish enough adequately funded programmes to achieve the declared ends. In a scenario where the need for quick results was clear, there was a tendency to see LLL as a 'more effective strategy for achieving targets ambitious in themselves' (Field, 2001, p. 5), which relied on people's capacity for action. Here, the *Memorandum* appealed to the Union and member states to stop engaging in direct, high-profile political intervention, even though their presence was still strong in some aspects. The state and the European Union adopted a coordinating role in a context of partnerships between public bodies and between public and private organisations. This coordination became more urgent as it accentuated the individualisation and privatisation of education. These processes actually involved changes in the state's mode of governing: they compelled regulation carried out from outside the state, in this case the European Union, and from within it. These various levels of regulation were not always complementary and consistent with respect to objectives; they involved intervention induced by civil society, the market, and the individuals being educated and trained. Here, the appeal for governance entailed greater responsibility for non-state agents for education (in particular civil society), the market, and individuals. Which is why, according to Rose, the so-called attention to governance concealed an appeal to *govern without governing*. The government in fact included levels *closer* to individuals, especially the regional and local levels. These were seen in the citizens' choices in the name of freedom and diluting of the boundaries between public and private (cf. Rose, 1999), and in the value placed on expertise, whether this was expertise of the adults who were learning or that of the specialist who guided the learner.

The analysis has so far stressed the *strategic dimension* of LLL proclaimed by the European Union, owing to the abandonment of ends in policy-making in favour of strategies with regard to means and to the continuous reskilling of the workforce (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b). The shift from education to learning and to the reform of the welfare state has contributed to these circumstances. Additionally, following Field's argument, 'policy seemed to be missing, presumed dead', in the aforementioned documents, because a favourable policy climate had generated very few results, and because the almost exclusive focus on interventions was mainly designed to improve the skills and flexibility of the workforce (Field, 2006, pp. 29ff.). Therefore, in the early 1990s, it was clear that ambitious orientations had led to poor results, but a lack of programmes and funding to support lifelong learning were also factors. These reasons contributed to the European Union's clear adjustment in its intervention in LLL orientations, which will be examined in the next section of this book. It will be seen that these adjustments involved

stressing managerialist procedures to promote the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy orientations, as well as focusing on qualifications and competencies.

## 4.5 Relaunching the Lisbon Strategy towards EU 2020

### *Further steps*

In the past decade, the policy documents produced by the European Union kept to the direction defined by the Lisbon Strategy, which aimed to build a 'European area of lifelong learning' and, simultaneously, the 'most competitive area in the world in 2010'. The relevant European Commission report, entitled *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (2001), said that this should take the form of a crossing point between learning and employment, thereby making it possible to take better advantage of people's skills and qualifications. Given this purpose, the understanding of lifelong learning was broadened to embrace a variety of forms and levels of education and training (from preschool to higher education, including non-formal and informal education). Once again, a particularly important aspect in this document involved the role of people in designing their own paths. These paths should be associated with 'the promotion of equal opportunities, quality and the relevance of learning possibilities' (cf. European Commission, 2001b).

Emphasis was on the fact that the construction of this area would require, among other things, 'the reform of existing education and training systems in the various countries'. Yet again, this appeal included an educational proposal for *human resources management* and education to be competitive. This proposal was targeted at the goals established by the Lisbon Strategy, allied with

- the creation of partnerships in the heart of the public administration (national, regional, and local) and with bodies that promote education and training initiatives (public, private, by civil society, or profit-making)
- the identification of people's individual training needs and the labour market
- the mobilisation of financial resources to develop initiatives, which involves not only money but the supervision and control of how it is spent
- the expansion of learning opportunities by increasing the number of education, training, and learning centres, looking at workplaces and other locations as places for learning



- the encouragement of a learning culture that would motivate people, increase levels of participation, and illustrate the importance of learning at any age
- the prevention of weaker sectoral social groups suffering social and education exclusion
- the specification of assessment and control mechanisms, as well as strategies that involve the recognition and dissemination of good practices (cf. European Commission, 2001b).

Priority actions in favour of LLL should be directed at (European Commission, 2001a, pp. 15ff.)

- ‘valuing learning, by creating a learning culture, facilitating access to learning opportunities and striving for excellence’. The valuing of formal diplomas and certificates, non-formal and informal learning, as well as the development of new instruments to assess, measure, and evaluate learning were key issues.
- ‘informing, guiding and counselling by contributing to or involving the facilitation of access to learning opportunities, creating a learning culture and partnership working’.
- ‘investing time and money in learning’ by stressing the need to maintain public investment in formal education and vocational training, and by sharing this responsibility with social partners, as well as by ensuring the returns and outcomes of such investment.
- ‘bringing together learners and learning opportunities’ by fomenting open and flexible education and training provision at local level; by encouraging learning communities, cities, and regions; and by setting up local learning centres; as well as by supporting learning at the workplace.
- ‘developing basic skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, IT skills, foreign languages and social skills’ in initiatives specifically targeting the most disadvantaged social groups.
- ‘innovating pedagogy’ within the shift from the formal knowledge approach to the competence one. Learning to learn as work-based learning were thus fostered as well as learning complemented with ICT.

The *Copenhagen Declaration* (European Commission, 2002), and in particular the document *Education and Training 2010* (European Commission, 2004), also reinforced the priorities that were already acknowledged, including the importance ascribed to the vocational aspect of education, learning, and competence. In order to promote and facilitate mobility and interinstitutional cooperation, it was stated that ‘Europe should be recognised as a benchmark at world level for adults’. Hence the need for providing greater



transparency, more information, and better orientation in education and training processes by recognising competencies and qualifications. These aims explained the emphasis on guaranteeing the quality of the models and pedagogical methods chosen (cf. European Commission, 2002).

The urgency of obtaining results was again highlighted owing to the importance for the European Union to keep up with its more direct rivals in the race towards a globalised economy. There were three aspects to this challenge (European Commission, 2004, pp. 22ff.):

- focussing reform and investment on key areas by mobilising the necessary resources effectively and by making the profession of teacher/trainer more attractive
- making lifelong learning a concrete reality by putting in place comprehensive, coherent, and concerted strategies, targeting efforts at disadvantaged social groups, and applying common European references and principles
- establishing a Europe of education and training by building a European Qualifications Framework, by increasing mobility through removing obstacles, and by actively promoting and consolidating the European dimension of education.

Even though the proposals were interesting, all these documents showed plenty of ambition with respect to education, training, and LLL, and in relation to what their promotion and the state intervention would involve. To worsen the situation, many aspects could be observed which indicated that these sectors were seen as tools for *managing human resources*, in the context of wider social and employment policies and of educating for competitiveness. So an effort was made to bring the various education and training systems in the EU countries closer together. This harmonisation foresaw a *process of European integration* that owed much to the *globalisation of education itself*. Several authors, including Field (cf. 2006) and Antunes (cf. 2008), found signs of worldwide diffusion of organisational patterns of education here, especially in terms of school education, even though this tendency has been noticeable since the end of the nineteenth century and could not be detached from the expansion of the nation state (cf. Nóvoa & Schriewer, 2000). The consolidation of this tendency was greatly helped by international organisations such as the European Union, which stimulated the penetration of ideologies and the institutionalisation of broadly standardised educational models. The state is, then, an essential agent in the globalisation process through its mediation activity, its position in the overall context, and its position in the processes and social, political, and institutional relations

that shaped the various national contexts. Here, tendencies to build a 'globally structured agenda' (Dale, 2001) or a 'new educational order' (cf. Field, 2006; Antunes, 2008, own translation) could be seen to emerge. This construction arose from the globalisation that revealed specific cross-border effects, in particular the existence of ideas and values at world level, promoters that Dale called an 'unexpected isomorphism in education' (Dale, 2001, p. 166). This construction was also linked to the fact that this agenda was allied to the actual characteristics of globalised capitalism. *Common scripts* to direct state intervention were found, though their use depended on their contextualisation for national contingencies.

In fact, this agenda became more obvious after the publication of the *Education and Training 2010* programme in 2004. This provided for the creation of a European global reference for national education policies and the emergence of a number of mechanisms such as EQF (cf. Nuissl, 2006). This preoccupation with qualifications and skills was actually interesting and marked a significant difference from previous EU documents and, especially, from the formal education policies promoted by the welfare state. This clearly indicated the importance of knowledge acquired through experience and work. It basically singled out the knowledge and abilities of worth to the economy, to productivity, and to competitiveness, provided they were useful to the optimisation of human capital.

The developments until then were regarded as *heterogeneous*, because 'along with undeniable progress there were obvious gaps and delays'. The European Council therefore saw fit to 'relaunch' the Lisbon Strategy in 2005. This relaunch involved boosting the priorities established earlier, which included 'renew[ing] the basis of [Europe's] competitiveness, increas[ing] its growth potential and its productivity and strengthen[ing] social cohesion' (European Council, 2005, p. 3). This implied enhancing knowledge and human capital. Research, education, and innovation thus had to be developed so as to turn knowledge into a gain and create better quality jobs. These goals were to be backed up by dialogue between public and private bodies. The context for all this was the promotion of economic growth and higher employment, and the strengthening of competitiveness and the European social model, the target being social cohesion. In its conclusions, the Council restated that

human capital is Europe's most important asset. Member States should step up their efforts to raise the general standard of education and reduce the number of early school-leavers, in particular by continuing with Education and Training 2010 work programme. Lifelong learning is a *sine qua non* if the Lisbon objectives are to be achieved, taking into account the desirability of high quality at all levels. The European Council calls on Member States to make lifelong learning an opportunity open to all in schools, businesses and households. Particular attention

should be paid to the availability of lifelong learning facilities for low-skilled workers and for the staff of small and medium-sized enterprises. (European Council, 2005, p. 11)

The relaunch also involved the adoption of orientations which coincided with the purposes of the Lisbon Strategy – that is, they benefited from the policy prioritisation accomplished by lifelong learning and led to the better funding of certain sectors of adult education, such as the Grundtvig Programme. At the same time, these orientations aimed to establish complex educational technical and management procedures, such as the EQF. The procedures set out to specify the relationship between qualification and competence and to catalogue the kinds of knowledge and expertise that, because they derive from practical experience, would be useful to economic development, as we shall show below.

### *The adjustments to the Lisbon Strategy: The stress on qualification and competencies*

The documents examined thus far, plus others that were published afterwards, invoked the orientations contained in the Lisbon Strategy, highlighting the need for policies to make Europe a more attractive place in which to invest and work. The principles set forth in these documents accept that knowledge and innovation would be levers for economic growth, and that policies to stimulate the creation of more and better jobs should be adopted. These orientations provide the spur for education, training, and learning as an overall policy goal to mobilise forces for change.

Regarding this, the document *Adult Learning: It Is Never too Late to Learn* (cf. European Commission, 2006) added a new impetus to adult education in the EU context. Concealing wider support for the Grundtvig Programme, which was a part of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–2013, with respect to general orientations and funding, the document was trying to conceive social recognition for adult learning in terms of visibility, policy prioritisation, and resources that this sector had never before enjoyed within the European Union. It stated, ‘this dichotomy between political discourse and reality is even more striking when set against the background of the major challenges confronting the Union’ (Communication of the European Commission, 2006).

The appreciation of adult learning was linked to the importance of LLL for competitiveness, employability, demographic change, social cohesion, active citizenship, and personal development. It was stressed that ‘taking the adult learning agenda forward’ was pivotal for the social and economic development of the Union.

#### **Text Box 9: Five key messages to stakeholders**

1. 'Lifting the barriers to participation.' Increasing the overall volume of participation in adult learning was considered an urgent measure, as was addressing the imbalances in participation in order to achieve a more equitable picture by motivating, encouraging, enabling, and supporting those adults least likely to participate in learning in all its modes – formal, non-formal, and informal. The state played a relevant role here in reaching the 'least-well served by education and training in the past' by removing barriers to participation and promoting demand. This included the development of guidance and information, learner-centred approaches, incentives to individuals, and support for the establishment of local partnerships.

2. 'Ensuring the quality of adult learning.' To avoid poor quality provision, teaching methods and materials were to be improved and adapted to adult learners; moreover, initial and continuing professional development to qualify and upskill people working in adult learning were to be put in place.

3. 'Recognition and validation of learning outcomes.' This could lead learners to identify their starting point, gain entry to a programme of learning to a particular level, achieve credits towards a qualification and/or achieve a full qualification based on competences. Therefore, the development of validation and recognition processes was encouraged as long as these were linked to the development of National Qualifications Frameworks within the overall context of the European Qualifications Framework.

4. 'Investing in the ageing population and migrants.' Active ageing was then stressed, ensuring a longer working life and learning provision for retired people. With respect to migrants, recognition of prior learning was proposed as the expansion of learning opportunities in linguistic, social, and cultural issues.

5. 'Indicators and benchmarks' were emphasised in order to monitor provision and allow for evidence-based policies to be pursued. It was stated that the quality and comparability of data on adult learning should continue to improve. In particular, there was a need for better insight into the benefits of adult learning and the barriers to its uptake, and for better data on providers, trainers, and training delivery.

**Source:** Communication of the European Commission, 2006

The orientations proposed by the European Union seem to clearly point to changes in state intervention in AE and public services directed at adults. Field added that in many countries, especially those that had adopted the welfare state, LLL was viewed as a strategy to 'bring education and training sys-

tems closer' and 'modernise' them. It was particularly linked to attempts to increase competitiveness and innovation. This concern arose just when trading relations were intensifying worldwide, and investment in human resources was motivated as something that should happen throughout people's lives, in all sorts of contexts. This favoured the acceptance of this idea in the political discourses of Western nations, though the outcomes did not always live up to the ambitious ends. This did not prevent a broad consensus being established for LLL. The consensus was based on recognising that skills were crucial to the development of lifelong learning, since they enabled people's knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to be shaped in the context of the learning society (Field, 2001, p. 11).

The *Action Plan on Adult Learning: It Is Always a Good Time to Learn* (2007) was relevant from this point of view – primarily because the document began by acknowledging that, despite the measures taken, the chances of training offered to adults were not keeping up with the evolving needs of individuals and society, and that the rate of participation of 25- to 64-year-olds was not increasing – indeed, it was stagnating throughout the European Union. Interestingly, this was why the need to target specific social groups was again highlighted, in particular the poorly qualified and those needing re-training, as was the importance of rethinking the strategies implemented up to then.



#### **Text Box 10: Action Plan on Adult Learning**

The plan's specific measures were

- to reduce labour shortages due to demographic changes by raising skills levels in the workforce generally and by upgrading low-skilled workers (80 million in 2006). Adult learning can contribute both rapidly and effectively to doing so;
- to address the problem of the persistent high number of early school leavers (nearly 7 million in 2007), by offering a second chance to those who enter adult age without having a qualification;
- to reduce the persistent problem of poverty and social exclusion among marginalised groups. Adult learning can both improve people's skills and help them towards active citizenship and personal autonomy;
- to increase the integration of migrants into society and the labour market. Adult learning offers tailor-made courses, including language learning, to contribute to this integration process. Furthermore, participation in adult learning in the host country can help migrants to secure validation and recognition for the qualifications they bring with them;
- to increase participation in lifelong learning and particularly to address the fact that participation decreases after the age of 34. At a time when the average working age is rising across Europe, there needs to be a parallel increase in adult learning by adult learners.

**Source:** European Commission, 2007a, p. 3

Committing once again to LLL, to adults, to education and training processes and procedures, and to the local bodies that undertook AE actions, this was added:

Good governance in adult learning providers is characterised by:

- focus on the adult learner;
- an innovative approach to learning;
- effective needs analysis;
- efficient administration systems and appropriate allocation of resources;
- professional staffing;
- quality assurance mechanisms for providers;
- strong evidence-based monitoring and evaluation systems within national frameworks.

(European Commission, 2007a, pp. 5ff.)

The changes being made in state intervention were therefore clear. The mechanisms of governance came to be crucial because they focused on the customisation of education and training pathways, some aspects of the activi-

ties' management and administration, and the partnerships and networks promoting initiatives. Here, induction, mediation, control, and assessment became determining state functions. Associated with the growing appreciation of AE as a social and employment policy, the role of the individual in building education and training pathways most appropriate for economic growth, for skills and expertise useful for developing work processes, and for learning and qualifications in a context of structural unemployment, stress was laid on learning as a *function* of individual and social life rather than an object of public policy, as claimed by Griffin (cf. 1999a, 1999b).

This instrumental dimension of lifelong learning accompanied the promotion of education and training for work, with particular emphasis on creating jobs in the management of information and relevant aspects of knowledge. Here, the EU proposals did not consider the emerging processes of social dualisation (among others, cf. Bélanger & Federighi, 2000; Sanz Fernández, 2008). In fact, the adults who participated most in education and training were 'the ones who knew most', who valued education and training, and could express their needs in these domains. These policy options meant that the European Union once again failed to consider that certain segments of the less-educated population neither valued education nor training, and still fewer were able to see what they needed. For such people, these were 'invisible needs' (Sanz Fernández, 2008, pp. 94ff.) that LLL did not allow them to identify.

In 2006, the European Union reorganised and launched several initiatives under the *Lifelong Learning Programme* (2007–2013). It consists of a huge range of actions, including supporting people's mobility and establishing partnerships and unilateral, national, and multilateral projects. Among the objectives are promoting quality in national education and training as a way to achieve the transnational transfer of innovation; fostering multilateral networks, policy studies, and reforms; reforming national education and training systems; granting specific support; conducting measures to monitor the proposed goals; preparing actions to be implemented; and organising meetings. This programme is aimed at all kinds of actors linked to education and training: students and trainees, teachers and lecturers, the heads of bodies that promote public and private education and training, social policies, and guidance, advisory, and information organisations, as well as research centres. These beneficiaries had an array of sectoral programmes at their disposal, notably Grundtvig, which is specifically focused on AE. Although funded by only 4 per cent of the Lifelong Learning Programme budget, the Grundtvig Programme improved the social visibility of adult education. It aims to meet the challenge of an ageing population and to help by providing education,

training, and learning pathways that lead to the acquisition and development of knowledge and skills (cf. European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2006).

The Grundtvig Programme's goals were to promote exchange, cooperation, and mobility so that education and training systems would become a world reference for quality, provided they were based on the Lisbon Strategy. It sought to champion the knowledge-based society and sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and enhanced social cohesion. Many of the ideas already set out in EU documents from 2000 until then were reinforced, and these aspects were stressed:

- the construction of a European identity by encouraging exchanges, cooperation, mobility intercultural dialogue, respect for European values, people and cultures, and tolerance
- the consolidation of the European Union as an advanced knowledge-based society notable for sustainable economic growth and the creation of more and better jobs, and in which innovation and entrepreneurship improve competitiveness and increase productivity
- the strengthening of social cohesion, taken as both a strategy for constructing a European identity and citizenship and as a way of increasing the participation of various social groups in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of Europe
- the appreciation of education, training, and (above all) lifelong learning. Here you could find many demands for these sectors, especially those linked to the economy, industry, and the labour market, since it was argued that education, training, and learning should 'help cultivate creativity, competitiveness and employability', and 'boost the development of the entrepreneurial spirit' (cf. Official Journal of the European Union, 2006).

The intention was also to establish conditions to foster social cohesion, such as citizenship and the participation of particular social groups, access to social rights such as education, language learning, and tolerance among peoples. There are other aspects, related to education, such as guaranteeing the quality of education and training systems so that they yield high levels of performance, innovation, access to and success in education and training initiatives, cooperation between the various actors, information and dissemination of good practices, with a view to increasing the quality of education and training services and the time spent learning (cf. Official Journal of the European Union, 2006).

In 2007, a Resolution of the Council of the European Union began by recognising yet again that

education and training, in the context of lifelong learning perspective, are an indispensable means for promoting adaptability and employability, active citizenship, personal and professional fulfilment. They facilitate free mobility for European citizens and contribute to the achievement of the goals and aspirations of the European Union, as it seeks to respond to the challenges posed by globalisation and an ageing population. They should enable all citizens to acquire the necessary knowledge to take an active part in the knowledge society and the labour market.

The objectives of full employment, job quality, labour productivity and social cohesion can better be reached if they are reflected in clear priorities: to attract and retain more people in employment, to increase labour supply; to improve the adaptability of workers and enterprises, and to increase investment in human capital through better education, and the development of skills and competences. (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. 1)

In this context, the resolution indicated the need to

- equip people for new jobs within the knowledge-based society by means of education and training strategies such as giving priority to disadvantaged social groups, providing initial education and training, supporting jobseekers with vocational guidance and specific and short duration training, and so forth
- maintain initiatives in the field of recognising previous learning acquired throughout life and matching such skills with the European Qualifications Framework
- addressing funding and quality issues by using the existing EU funding programmes, by implementing European reference tools, and involving social partners (Council of the European Union, 2007, pp. 2ff.).

The EQF was finally formally approved in 2008. This framework again demonstrated the Union's interest in education, especially in further education. It paved the way for the establishment of a platform, a common European reference for the harmonisation of national qualifications systems, which were indeed extremely disparate. The framework placed great importance on the outcomes of learning when defining and describing qualifications, and on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, particularly with respect to people who had fewer opportunities of entering the labour market. The document envisaged eight levels of qualification, with each level leading to qualifications ranging from basic general knowledge to cutting-edge knowledge in an area of study or work (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2009).

*Table 2: Levels, knowledge, skills, and competencies established by the EQF*

Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work and study under direct supervision in a structured context
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work and study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts in a field of study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for competition of tasks in work or study, adapt own behaviour to circumstances when solving problems
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable but are subject to change, supervise the routine work of others, and take responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change, review and develop performance of self and others
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study involving critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, take responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work and study contexts, take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups



<b>Level 7</b>	Highly specialised knowledge some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study as the basis for original thinking and/or research  Critical awareness of knowledge issue in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches, take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
<b>Level 8</b>	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

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**Source:** European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2009.

Like many other frameworks, this one set out to be a unifying device to create ladders, linkages, and pathways that afford seamless mobility to lifelong learners (cf. Harris, 1999). It also tried ‘to bring together something that has been different’ – the heterogeneity that is a feature of adult education in many European countries (cf. Nuissl, 2006). These two purposes resonated with a conception of adult education underpinned by a market-led philosophy in which education is consumer-oriented, utilitarian, and viewed mainly in terms of its value to the labour market. In this context, according to the European Union, education again assured a form of human capital, behaviourism, functional or technical policy supported by standardisation discourses.

Some aspects should be noted with respect to these levels of qualification and some of the definitions existing in the EQF. The first is that work was conceived as both a powerful learning tool and a strong economic resource, because it favoured the convergent knowledge required to increase productivity and the adaptation of workers to organisational change. The stress was on the usefulness of learning and the relevance of skills for competitiveness (cf. Lima, 2008). Work was considered as a set of routine tasks that had to be completed by workers during their working life and was therefore a source of unlearning. Furthermore, this framework did not consider that learning was often contextualised. The content of learning is thus often divergent and fragmented. This is quite important if we consider that it is generally difficult to transfer work-based knowledge. Even if the decontextualised nature of standards covered a variety of contexts and learning that stemmed from them, variety, divergence,

and fragmentation were relevant aspects of work-based learning that the framework simply forgot. This meant that the people having knowledge, skills, and competencies who would benefit most from the framework would be those closest to the standards, the people who had the desirable knowledge. But those who did not fit the formalisation levels of knowledge, skills, and competence might have felt excluded (Harris, 1999, pp. 127ff.).

Other issues relate to the fact that a correlation between supranational, national, and individual needs and interests was taken for granted, but in fact it is rarely the case. This framework saw workers as rational, pragmatic, and economically oriented people, especially in terms of the development and competitiveness of the enterprises for which they work. Even if there were some correlation between individuals' interest and needs and supranational orientations concerning lifelong learning, even if people were to take some decisions rationally, the fact was that in most circumstance this did not happen. This hidden divergence contained in a document technically based on a broad consensus was evident, for instance, in the definitions of qualification, assessment, validation, and recognition of learning outcomes given in the framework. The link between knowledge, skills, and competence – in fact the relations between what people know to do and what they can do – was essential in the EQF definitions.

#### **Text Box 11: Definitions in the EQF**

**'Qualification'** means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent institution determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

**'Learning outcomes'** means statements of what learners know, understand and will be able to do on completion of a learning process and which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

**'Assessment of learning outcomes'** means the methods and processes used to establish the extent to which a learner has in fact attained particular knowledge, skills and competence.

**'Validation of learning outcomes'** means a process of confirming that certain assessed learning outcomes achieved by a learner correspond to specific outcomes which may be required for a unit or a qualification.

**'Recognition of learning outcomes'** means the process of attesting officially achieved learning outcomes through the awarding of units or qualifications.

**Source:** European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2009

The simple manner in which complex ideas and concepts were presented is surprising and can only be explained by the European Union's recurring preference for rational and technical procedures that support managerialist principles. This framework thus confirmed the trend towards *depoliticisation* processes, 'subjugated to a technocratic and hyperrational managerialist agenda'. The process of political decision, governed by technical, rational imperatives is thus seen as *the right decision*, backed up by the criteria of efficiency, ability to calculate, predictability, and control. This discourse legitimates a new rational order based on the market, economic competitiveness, and customer-focused management in a *business-orientated education* approach typical of the *human resources management model* (Lima, 2007, p. 45). In addition, the relation between work, in terms of specific knowledge valuable for work contexts and organisations, and education (in the general sense, as it may include training and learning) was crucial to the EU understanding of adult education and learning and to the building of this framework. This was quite a significant aspect, however, that was in line with the main aims of education and training principles favoured by EU policy documents since the late 1990s. In fact, the analysis in this book shows that education, viewed as a humanistic and emancipatory field, was not a central concern for the European Union.

In March 2010, the European Commission communication *Europe 2020: The EU Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth* stated:

Europe faces a moment of transformation. The crisis has wiped out years of economic and social progress and exposed structural weaknesses in Europe's economy. In the meantime, the world is moving fast and long-term challenges – globalisation, pressure on resources, ageing – intensify. The EU must now take charge of its future. (European Commission, 2010b, p. 3)

The EU goals therefore included promoting smart growth by developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; sustainable growth by favouring a more resource efficient, greener, and more competitive economy; and inclusive growth by fostering a high-employment economy to deliver social and territorial cohesion. For this last purpose, education, training, and life-long learning, with particular reference to formal education, needed pathways to be fostered by all member states, along with the acquisition of new skills throughout life, especially for the more deprived social groups (cf. European Commission, 2010b).

Marking a new stage in the EU guidance on education and training, *Europe 2020* does not seem to be very different from the other documents discussed up to that point. It boosts the idea of lifelong learning becoming

both a global agenda and a 'new fashion', as argued by Field (2006, pp. 11ff.). Furthermore, it retains the relation between education, training, and economic development by granting adult education the status of an instrument for *human resources management*, and by establishing complex technical processes for that link, especially after the adoption of the EQF.

Though the resources granted have been increased, even if being sparse compared with the funds allocated to a lot of other social sectors, and the results of LLL have been disappointing, this is not yet another lost opportunity for adult education. Indeed, the European Union has not been set up as a place to define and adopt policies that might allow this sector to learn its way out (cf. Finger & Asún, 2001) of an economic and managerialistic understanding, nor to conceive adult education as a varied, heterogeneous, complex, and inclusive domain that demands global, integrated policies (cf. Lima, 2008).

## 4.6 Synthesis

This chapter has made it clear that the policy documents published by the European Union in the last few years put LLL and AE at the centre, giving them pride of place, in accordance with the principles and guidance set forth in the Lisbon Strategy. These principles reveal social and economic policies designed to increase productivity and competitiveness, and to preserve and create jobs. The EU orientations also stress the part played by individuals in the construction of their own biographies, and the importance of education, training, and learning to foster adaptability and flexibility in the context of work.

Lifelong learning, favoured by the European Union, showed isomorphic tendencies in public education policies (cf. Antunes, 2008; Dale, 2001). It also met the demands of globalisation and the economy. It therefore considered orientations that focused on encouraging the adaptability of individuals, flexibility, competitiveness, and growth in the service of the knowledge-based economy. It tightened the relationship between education, learning, and work and stressed other spaces, times, and modes of adult education. It was expressed in a 'pedagogy of work' and strategies for 'learning to work' (Field, 2006, pp. 79ff.). Lifelong learning came to be seen as 'power technology'. As it was associated with work, it meant that individuals should become responsible for their educational and training pathways; at the same time, they saw their social and political power decline because of the state's waning intervention in guaranteeing their rights (cf. Olssen & Peters, 2005).



It was in these adverse and complex circumstances that Finger and Asún (2001, pp. 105ff.) believed that the ‘pillars of adult education’, which sustained the construction of a specific epistemological, educational, and pedagogical edifice, showed considerable wear and tear. The most striking practices, which revealed the ‘intention of a scientific rationality’ and an ‘ideology of progress’ (especially through the use of the concept of *development*) lost something of their meaning. The AE project that still came from the Enlightenment, the ideology of development, and the idea that adult education was a project of the nation state were no longer such meaningful ideas. In a context where international organisations such as the European Union played increasingly critical and supposedly consensual roles in AE, the lack of support from the old pillars seems to have left this domain ‘at a crossroads’.

A striking feature of this crossroads was related to the fact that LLL was focusing on new spaces and contexts for AE that were now more *worldly*. Although interesting, this appeal raised problems for the relations between education and how people learned. Other forms, spaces, and times for learning came to be appreciated because education, particularly formal education, does not let individuals develop their abilities to the full. This is one of the commonest criticisms levelled at the commitment to recognising and validating skills acquired throughout life. Education and training were also narrowed by the qualification-competence pairing, which also forbade the adoption of broader and more complex conceptions of AE, and the implementation of actions that encouraged the training of democratic, independent, thinking, and critical citizens.

These circumstances further called attention to the tendencies for the development of *instrumentalisation* in AE, related to the ‘economisation of social life’ (cf. Lima, 2008, own translation). Learning came to be viewed as a contribution to companies’ economic growth and a way of increasing the likelihood that people would enter the labour market. The prevalence of economic rationality and the predominance of knowledge and information in the distribution of goods and services ensured that the function of this domain stressed vocational, work-related, training, and organisational development tasks. As Finger et al. (1998) suggest, ‘from the point of view of labour organisations, adult education proves to be an adequate instrument for the purpose of increasing the organisation’s competitiveness in a globalised market’ (p. 19).

People were thus motivated to take part in AE to be able to survive in an ever more competitive labour market, thereby making it even more instrumental. Meanwhile, belief in the chance of social mobility, which was an essential aspect of the *modernisation and state control model*, particularly of the policies typical of the welfare state, came to rely more and more on



knowledge and the certificates held, which facilitated the acquisition of new skills that would enable participation in labour organisations. So AE, particularly LLL, emphasised its strategic and functional nature (cf. Bauman, 2005b). As a result, LLL represented a new way of defining educational tasks in societies: it encouraged the reorganisation of education and training systems for various reasons, including the changing nature of work, new functions of knowledge, and the dysfunctionality of the more traditional education institutions (including schools). Moreover, LLL emphasised the emergence of an outline of a new education economy characterised by the customisation of knowledge (cf. Alheit & Dausien, 2002, pp. 6ff.). As Ball concluded (2007, p. 32), 'education is no longer extra-economic.'

## Exercises and tasks

### *Exercise 1*

Carefully read the quotation below and write a one- to two-page critical analysis of it based on what you have learned from reading this chapter:

Lifelong learning has indeed returned with no little vengeance to the education and training policy agenda since the mid-1990s. It now tells, however, a very different story of lifelong learning in terms of strategies to deal with the challenges of globalization, the competitiveness of economies, creation of jobs, flexible economies, worldwide migration, multicultural societies, social cohesion and social exclusion. *Learning for earning* is the name of the lifelong learning game in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Hake, 2006, p. 35)

### *Exercise 2*

Mészáros (2005, p. 75) states that education 'cannot be vocational', since in current society that would mean confining people to narrowly predefined utilitarian functions deprived of any kind of decision power. This is why several authors have advocated that preparation for work should be stopped and be replaced by an education for individuals as subjects, for transformation, and not just for adjustment or alienation.

- a) Define the conception of ALE which you think underlies the reasoning in the above statement. Use the three analysis models studied in Chapter 3;
- b) Make a comparative analysis between that conception of ALE and the EU strategy on LLL, choosing for the purpose one of the policy documents studied in this chapter.

- c) Finally, express your personal opinion and justify it based on the main concepts outlined in this study guide.

### *Task 1*

Take the Lisbon Strategy as your reference, using this site:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm)

- Describe its main objectives.
- Explain the role assigned to ALE.
- Comment critically on the position of some of the authors referenced in this chapter who believe that education has become less accepted as a cultural policy and more promoted as a strategy for economic competitiveness and employability.
- Justify the centrality that the European strategy for LLL ascribed to the concepts of vocational education and training, equal opportunities, employability, entrepreneurship, and adaptability, and find other concepts of equal importance.

### *Task 2*

#### **Working Group**

Choose two of the following EU policy documents:

- A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000)
  - Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality (2001)
  - Adult Learning: It Is Never too Late to Learn (2006)
  - Establishing an Action Programme in the Field of Lifelong Learning (2006)
- For each of the documents chosen, select the main policy options, the objectives to be achieved, and the most relevant concepts.
  - Analyse the elements that you have chosen according to the three analytical models of the ALE policies studied in Chapter 3. Draw some conclusions and indicate the possible intersection points of different analytical models.
  - Choose an ALE public policy in your country and find the similarities and/or differences relative to the EU strategies. Give examples to illustrate your analysis.



## 5. UNESCO as a Policy Actor in Education

### 5.1 The connection between education and development

UNESCO is an organisation which aims to address humanitarian, social, and political problems through education (cf. Knoll, 2007; UNESCO, 2010a), where topics related to knowledge, science, and culture are discussed by representatives of various nation states. Therefore, the way this organisation operates has given a state/public and international dimension to education issues which used to be of a private and/or national nature.

#### **Text Box 12: UNESCO goals**

UNESCO works to create the conditions for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based upon respect for commonly shared values. It is through this dialogue that the world can achieve global visions of sustainable development encompassing observance of human rights, mutual respect and the alleviation of poverty, all of which are at the heart of UNESCO's mission and activities.

**Source:** UNESCO, 2010a

Since its birth in 1945, UNESCO has fostered a wide range of events, each reflecting the context and concerns of their times. Knoll (2007, p. 24) argued that these events 'provided a reservoir of utopian and practical visions of how the world should and could be arranged'. These events involved the participation of representatives of the member states and aimed to define international education policies and to influence the content of national policies. Here, UNESCO contributed to the convergence of education policy, in particular with regards to lifelong education and/or learning. As Schemmann (2007, p. 158) put it, organisations such as this one, as well as the European Union and the OECD, generated a 'widespread agreement over the concept of lifelong learning at both national and international or supranational level'. In this way, they helped construct globally structured agendas for education (Dale,

2001), in spite of considerable differences between these international organisations.

At the heart of many of these meetings was the link between education and development, but over time the meanings associated with this relationship changed. These ideas were connected because UNESCO included countries with very different levels of economic, social and educational development. In fact, it was believed that the high illiteracy rates in certain countries represented an obstacle to the promotion of democracy and economic growth. These figures were an obstacle to development, at a time when there was a demand for better-informed citizens, with specific knowledge and skills. Following along this line of thought, this organisation determined that education, science, and culture should work for development, in order to reach the levels of industrialisation and well-being in countries where capitalism was more advanced.

Initially, development included personal, social, economic, cultural, and political dimensions. Based on this all-encompassing meaning, this concept provided the basic theme for the commemorations of the Development Decade in the 1960s. It had strong ties with AE. This field had its roots in social movements and civil society organisations. In these contexts, popular and non-formal education actions which focused on social transformation were promoted (Barros, 2008, pp. 171ff.; Finger & Asín, 2001, pp. 19ff.; Kallen, 2002, pp. 32ff.).

Specifically for public policies, there was a clear need to adapt national economies to the expansion of the capitalist system and use scientific and technological progress appropriately, from a social, cultural, and political perspective. The state, companies, and civil society organisations were designing educational initiatives which focused on educating citizens, in a broad sense, and on reconverting and adapting the labour force, in a narrower sense. These actions should promote the acquisition of new knowledge, fostering the level of qualification of individuals. They were activities which aimed to establish closer ties between various social fields, in particular work, even if they were characterised by the existence of multiple rules (for programming, evaluation, and certification) and formalisation processes which many believed should be made more nimble.

Outside of the scope of public policies, the concern with development was reflected in the fact that many bodies, especially in civil society – many of which were indirectly backed by the state – promoted social and cultural educational activities. Involving specific participants, these activities often did not impose a formal evaluation or other rigid and bureaucratic procedures. Therefore, they represented another way of connecting education and



development which many believed should be promoted, in order to achieve the emancipation of people and the democratisation of societies.

In this context, UNESCO strived to identify and discuss the leading issues and more emblematic actions in the field of adult education which fostered development. As a result, this international organisation was responsible for a unique effort in the organisation and systematisation of adult education as an arena for theoretical debates and a field of practices, by putting forward the concept of *lifelong education* (LLE). A key moment came with the Tokyo International Conference in 1972. Under the heading *Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Education*, this meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on the sectors which this field comprised and the role they played in the development and construction of fairer and freer democratic societies, based on the work carried out by universities, state bodies, civil society organisations, companies, and the like. These discussions fostered the institutionalisation and legitimisation of different themes and educational practices within lifelong education and/or lifelong learning. According to Finger and Asún (2001), it was in this context that AE acquired its identity as a worldwide policy. Since then, this field has acquired a new-found status in many states and, due to the influence of this organisation, in public policies (see, for example, Field 2006; Finger, 2008, p. 17).

## **5.2 Lifelong education: A democratic and humanistic project**

In the 1970s, UNESCO argued for the definition of the concept of LLE within the frame of radical thinking that had emerged by that time. This idea was based on a broader meaning of the connection between education and development, while combining forms and modes of education (formal, non-formal, and informal) in a novel way. The combination of such different modes reflected the value given to moments and spaces in which education – and learning – took place. For these reasons, LLE was based on a strong criticism of the school and the fact that, for over thirty years, education systems in many countries had been unable to become truly democratic. This inability meant these systems were not effective in satisfying their populations' social and economic needs or their expectations of upward social mobility (cf. Field, 2001).

In fact, UNESCO's interest in LLE emerged at a time when various principles of the welfare state, such as the optimism concerning development,

prosperity, and the ability of schools to promote equal opportunities, were being challenged. In spite of the increase in spending, the possibility of education weakening or eliminating economic, social, and educational inequalities was lower than expected, as several studies have shown (cf. Kallen, 2002).

It was in this context, marked by different tensions, that new political proposals emerged. According to Rubenson, these proposals aimed to combine very different approaches, in particular 'a humanistic and utopian vision of society and education and a clearly Marxist desire for social change'. They combined 'the need to build a fairer society, which provided better living conditions, with the importance of adapting individuals to change' (Rubenson, 2004, pp. 29ff.).

Alongside the organisation of several international conferences and the publication of the associated reports and declarations, the *Faure Report*, written in 1972, provided a more detailed definition of lifelong education, in particular regarding the connection between education and development. This led Canário to argue that this document represented a 'turning point' (Canário, 1999, p. 87) in the understanding of adult education. This understanding substantiated what Griffin (1999a, p. 331) had termed the 'social democratic approach to lifelong learning', since it was a social and 'not simply a public policy approach' to adult education.

The *Faure Report* was based on four themes:

- the problems of socio-economic development, regarding scientific and technological progress and its impact on society
- the importance of democracy for building fairer societies
- the role of education, in particular LLE, in development, which should 'allow man to be himself'
- education reform, regarding the continuity of studies, as well as the forms and contents of pedagogical practices, according to autonomous and liberating conceptions of education and development.

Due to the importance education had acquired since the Second World War, these themes made it possible to discuss topics (economic, political, scientific, cultural, etc.) which contributed to the construction of a society which valued learning and produced democratic and participative citizens – the *learning society*.

### **Text Box 13: Role of education in LLE**

Since the end of the Second World War, education has become the world's biggest activity as far as over-all spending is concerned. In budgetary terms, it ranks a close second in world expenditure of public funds, coming just after military budgets, it is being asked to carry out increasingly vast and complex tasks that bear no comparison with those allotted to in the past. It constitutes a vital component in any effort for development and human progress and occupies an increasingly important position in the formulation of national and international policies. ... Now, probably for the first time in the history of humanity, development of education on a world-wide scale is tending to precede economic development. ... Another no less important fact for the future, of a sociological order, is that for the first time in history, education is now engaged in preparing men for a type of society which does not yet exist.

**Source:** Faure et al., 1972, pp. 12ff.

The report aimed at a break with the dominant understanding of education at the time, which was restricted to formal education. The document included a proposal for reforming the education systems, in which LLE would be an instrument for developing education, for state intervention, and for democratising teaching (Boshier, 1998, pp. 6ff.). Thus:

Interest in education has never been greater. Among parties, generations and groups, it has become the subject of controversy which often takes on the dimensions of political and ideological battles. Education has become one of the favourite themes of empirical and scientific criticism. It is easy to see why public figures are taken aback when their authority is challenged, not courteously – as in the past, by a few enlightened personalities – but massively by angry and even rebellious students. Also understandable is the wary reaction to many conclusions from present-day research, to the extent that they undermine the foundations of certain postulates once regarded as immutable. We believe that all these forms of dissent – overt or covert, peaceful or violent, reformist or radical – deserve consideration in one way or another when educational policies and strategies are being mapped out for the coming years and decades. (Faure et al., 1972, p. 22)

The report therefore highlighted the need to think of a world and societies which were different because they were fairer. The aim was to overcome the social and educational dualisation (cf. Sanz Fernández, 2008): on the one hand, populations and groups who had access to a variety of educational opportunities and, on the other, those who lived with very little and did not have access to education. In order to avoid this situation and the ensuing 'danger of dehumanisation', it was argued that everyone should have access to a mini-

imum level of well-being, a core feature of modernisation and state control. It was argued that education should help prepare individuals for the changes which were taking place.

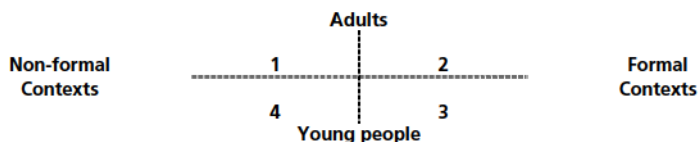
Education suffers basically from the gap between its content and the living experience of its pupils, between the systems of values that it preaches and the goals set up by society, between its ancient curricula and the modernity of science. Link education to life, associate it with concrete goals, establish a close relationship between society and economy, invent or rediscover an education system that fits its surroundings – surely this is where the solution must be sought. (Faure et al., 1972, p. 69)

The report made it clear that, while teaching gave priority to children and young people, education happened across all ages and life situations. The demands of economic and social development were associated with the ongoing process, which called for the acquisition of new knowledge and skills throughout life. The humanistic approaches, especially the more prominent debates in the social sciences, in particular in psychology and pedagogy, showed that ‘man was an unfinished being’ and ‘programmed to learn’ (Freire, 1993), which required a permanent education. Thus new conceptions of the individual and education were put forward. The complete development of the individual, the conquering of freedom, and the promotion of democracy in the context of profound changes emerged as essential goals of education:

Foreseeing the advent of democracy to the world of education is not an illusion. It may not be a perfect democracy, but when has this ever existed? Yet it will at least be a real, concrete, practical democracy, not inspired and built by bureaucrats or technocrats, or granted by some ruling caste. It will be living, creative and evolving. For this to be achieved, social structures must be changed and the privileges built into our cultural heritage must be reduced. Educational structures must be remodelled, to extend widely the field of choice and enable people to follow lifelong education patterns. (Faure et al., 1972, p. 79)

These ideas gained expression in the meeting of two axes related to the degree of formalisation of education contexts and the characteristics of individuals, in particular their age.

*Figure 1: Dimensions of LLE*



Source: Adapted from Boshier, 1998, p. 7



According to this diagram, LLE developed in formal and non-formal contexts, covering children, young people, and adults. All quadrants were of the same size, in order to emphasise the idea that LLE included adult education and that this was as important as the education of children and young people. For this reason, the authors of the *Learning to Be Report* defended that the distribution of resources should be equitable between education developed in formal and non-formal contexts. The fact that the axes were represented by dotted lines hinted at the permeability of the suggestion, in particular the possibility of alternating between formal and non-formal education contexts, envisaging that learning undertaken in non-formal contexts should be acknowledged. This suggestion thus established the need to value all learning, as well as the recognition of its quality. It also embodied a non-linear conception of learning, which could happen in very different spaces and times (Boshier, 1998, pp. 7ff.).

Due to these features, which could be attributed to the *democratic-emanipatory model*, the *Faure Report* was widely accepted. This was helped by the universal and visionary character of the conception of education (Griffin, 1999a, p. 21). The report was also based on an understanding which was 'collectivist, anarchic and utopian, which aimed to legitimise learning that took place in non-formal and informal contexts and increase the recognition of organic intellectuals and learning which happened with life', according to Boshier (1998, p. 15). For Martin, this work was a 'progressivist and humanistic anthology of the idea of learning to be', since the meaning of education was more encompassing than 'learning to have, to get, to do, learning to adapt to changes or even learning to survive' (cf. Martin, 2003, p. 577). Field also argued that this document was a turning point in AE. It considered the establishment of LLE, understood as an essential idea in education policies, and supported the need to create an 'unprecedented social model' which would lead to a learning society (Field, 2006, p. 13). UNESCO's work also enabled the emergence of 'an optimistic stage in policy and of international educational reform', as well as reflecting the importance of the more innovative and radical currents of AE which valued experience, biography, and self-directed learning (Canário, 2001a, pp. 90ff.).

Regarding AE public policies, the concept of LLE focused on education as an object, provision, organisation, and regulation. These were clearly the principles of the *modernisation and state control model*. In fact, LLE became one of the socio-educational pillars of the welfare state, a component of the social and redistributive policies of the post-war period. Along these lines, Griffin stated that UNESCO shaped the 'social democratic version of lifelong education', which implied the state had the responsibility to guarantee educa-



tional and formative provision (cf. Griffin, 1999b, p. 432). Complementing this, in seeking to incorporate very different forms and modes of education, it adopted the objectives 'education for democratic citizenship and free and responsible participation, for development and social change, for the enlightenment and autonomy of citizens' (Lima, 2007, p. 102). For this reason, the conception of LLE advocated by UNESCO was also committed to personal development and to the social change in the contexts, economic situations, and living conditions of individuals.

Through this idea, education emerged as a *social right*, requiring the state to be responsible for achieving it and to guarantee equal opportunities. In the words of Bélanger and Federighi, public policies started to include measures which promoted access to different modes of education and the participation of individuals in the conception, development, and evaluation of educational initiatives. In this context, apart from expressing claims such as equal opportunities, and innovative educational and pedagogical practices conceived for specific or diverse groups, these policies promoted the translation of the principle *learning to learn* into political programmes and legislative and administrative measures. Thus they were no longer confined to experiments under development and specific cases of academic interest, so as to focus on mechanisms of a universal nature. By this route, through UNESCO's contribution, AE also emerged as an *individual right* (cf. Bélanger & Federighi, 2000, p. 49).

In spite of its novel character, UNESCO's work, and specifically LLE, in the end had little influence on the public policies in many countries. In fact, LLE signalled a high degree of optimism regarding the role of education and learning. In this respect, Jarvis argued that 'the optimistic idealism of the report reflected the euphoria of the last stage of the 1960s – a period of romanticism' (Jarvis, 2007, p. 68). This fact led this author to claim that the concept of LLE incorporated ambiguities which, in 1972, were still not clear. In this perspective, LLE was a great utopia which encompassed a range of political, social, educational, and pedagogical dimensions (cf. Jobert, 1989; Pineau, 1989). When combined, these dimensions could provide the basis for a critique of society, in particular of capitalism, of a bureaucratic and inflexible state, of narrow conceptions of social justice and equal opportunities, as well as of an education system centred on teaching, which generated social inequalities. As a result, the combination of such different dimensions involved tensions.

According to Rubenson, the discussion of this concept brought together 'vague ideas, utopian aspirations and not-very-precise issues of a practical nature about education and learning' (Rubenson, 2004, p. 30), especially because when people talked about education, they often thought about teaching,

and teaching often brought to mind traumatic experiences and asymmetric power relations. Therefore, the learning which resulted from formal education did not always appeal to 'a return to school'. So, according to this author, LLE was a somewhat 'innocent' suggestion.

On the other hand, the defence of the democratisation of education implied a broadening of opportunities for access. However, these opportunities varied significantly and did not provide comparable, or certifiable, learning. The promotion of access did not necessarily lead to educational success, especially because the contexts of non-formal and informal education, given their diversity, did not necessarily promote learning, much less comparable and socially recognised learning (Boshier, 1998, pp. 8ff.).

For these and other reasons, the principles of LLE had a limited impact on national public policies in the end. They formed a reductive and circumscribed conception of education, determined by the post-school period and/or aimed at an audience of non-schooled adults. Or, as Canário said, LLE on occasion merely incorporated 'an ongoing professional training based on the concept of recycling or a second opportunity education'. He also remarked that

the establishment of permanent education policies (despite the importance of non-formal education formats) developed a tendency to extend the school form to people's life. Instead of permanent education there was permanency of education (school mode) that invaded domains and contaminated activities which up to then were not covered by school. ... Finally, and completely contradicting the conception of education as a process of 'learning to be', broadening the school form to all times and spaces helped to undermine the human acquisitions achieved via a non-school route, based on experiences undergone. (Canário, 2001b, p. 47, own translation)

The expression was used until the end of the 1970s, although its impact in terms of policy and practice was not really visible. According to Field (2001, pp. 7ff.), this was explained by two factors. The first was tied to the fact that LLE was a concept promoted by international organisations, such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe, which did not have any effective powers to intervene in the countries which they comprised. The second was related to the economic crisis which erupted at the start of that decade, and to the crumbling of an economic model committed to full employment. This crisis highlighted contradictions in this concept, in particular those related to the inadequacy of education, specifically teaching, in light of the technological developments and innovations taking place in the workplace at the time.

In an uncertain and troubled context, the expression was gradually abandoned. This abandonment implied the underestimation of an eclectic and encompassing view of adult education, where the humanistic and socio-critical

approaches played a special role and were characteristic of the *democratic-emancipatory model*, while others were linked to the *modernisation and state control model*. In the end it involved the appreciation of the connection between education, economic development, and the theory of human capital, which more closely resembled the *human resources management model*. In this context, learning and, as a result, experience-related knowledge that was useful and economically valuable, such as competencies, showed clear connections. Thus, by detaching itself from the expression *lifelong education*, UNESCO fostered the emergence of another expression, *lifelong learning*, whose importance was later recognised by the European Union and the OECD. This change concealed the strong penetration of economic and market concerns into adult education, as we shall see below.

### **5.3 Lifelong learning: State supervision and individual responsibility**

The critiques of education were accompanied by the invasion of political discourses by concerns with the economy and the market in AE, although UNESCO did not clearly assume the defence of neo-liberal principles (cf. Field, 2001, 2006). This invasion became even clearer in the *Delors Report* (cf. Delors et al., 1996). The underlying assumption in this document was that the world was becoming more complex, as a result of several factors, including

- globalisation, a phenomenon which was not exclusively economic, but also technological, scientific, and so forth, and which played a decisive role in the recognition of a range of problems, such as migration, cultural diversity, and the like
- the risks connected to work and employment-related uncertainty, which posed new challenges for democracy
- social inequalities (which were maintained or which emerged in the meantime) and social and educational exclusion – circumstances in which education could not impose itself as a strategy for promoting equality.

It was in this setting that public education policies in many countries faced strong criticisms, in particular policies that focused on the disconnections between education and economic development. Paradoxically, it was also in this context that the Commission responsible for the report focused on making education a priority, by arguing that education was a vital asset for build-

ing a world in which peace, freedom, and social justice ruled (Delors et al., 1996, p. 13).

In spite of the leading role given to education, the tone associated with it changed when compared with the meanings expressed in the *Faure Report*. If the value of education was rooted in the fact that it enabled an understanding of the world and the conditions which described it, fostering the promotion of solidarity and tolerance, it also fostered the management of diversity and the development of a more aware and active citizenship, a participation more committed to work and economic development (cf. Delors et al., 1996, p. 19). Thus the emphasis was on aspects related to the *democratic-emancipatory model* and to the *modernisation and state control model*, evident in the importance given to the interpretation of individuals' living conditions, the promotion of respect for the other, and so forth. However, there was also a focus on aspects which rekindled concerns with work, economic productivity, and the like, as a result of changes ensuing from the internationalisation of the economy and competitiveness, related to the *human resources management model*. For this reason, there was a search for a balance, in itself complex, between broader, humanistic, and emancipatory conceptions of education, and conceptions of an instrumental and adaptive nature, which would contribute to economic growth. This circumstance highlighted a 'shift' (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b) in relation to political documents previously produced by UNESCO.

The *Delors Report* stated that education policies consisted in a permanent process of enriching the knowledge and know-how that was useful and had economic value. Complementarily, it was also mentioned that these policies resulted in a privileged route for the construction of the individual himself and for establishing collaborative relationships between individuals, groups, and nations. It was in this engagement between education for competitiveness (cf. Guimarães, 2010) and the individualisation of education that disparate political goals converged. These involved a paradox, especially when one considered individuals' expectations of economic development and social progress. This paradox followed from the disillusionments tied to the increase in unemployment and social exclusion, the growing tensions between the global and the local, between the universal and the singular, between tradition and modernity. Strangely, it was in this context that LLL emerged as a core dimension in public policies, by encompassing answers for the economic challenges of the twenty-first century. These answers involved increasingly individualised solutions, based on the experience acquired throughout life. The *learning to be* ideal, put forward in the *Faure Report*, was re-established here, and three further pillars were added: learning to know, learning to do, and learning to live together.



**Keywords: Education and change**

The traditional distinction between initial education and continuing education therefore needs to be reconsidered. Continuing education that is really in harmony with the needs of modern societies can no longer be defined in relation to a particular time of life (adult education as opposed to the education of the young, for instance) or to too specific a purpose (vocational as opposed to general). The time to learn is now the whole lifetime and each field of knowledge spreads into and enriches the others. As the twenty-first century approaches, education is so varied in its tasks and forms that it covers all the activities that enable people, from childhood to old age, to acquire a living knowledge of the world, of people and themselves.

**Source:** Delors et al., 1996, pp. 99ff.

In the eyes of the authors of the *Delors Report*, the traditional distinctions between initial education and LLE, between education of young people and adult education, did not make sense. In fact, there was a need to think based on an 'educational *continuum*, coextensive with life and encompassing the dimensions of society' which encompassed other educational modes and not just school education. They argued that

formal education systems tend to emphasize the acquisition of knowledge to the detriment of other types of learning; but it is vital now to conceive education in a more encompassing fashion. Such a vision should inform and guide future educational reforms and policy, in relation both to contents and to methods. (Delors et al., 1996, p. 18)

Thus there were quite clear differences between LLE and LLL. When compared with the *Faure Report* (cf. 1972), the *Delors Report* (cf. 1996) highlighted the individual responsibilities for education, but it tended to omit references to the obligations of the state. This focus had consequences for adults and lifelong education, which since then has clearly focused on intervening with disadvantaged groups and the satisfaction of the demands of the education market (cf. Griffin, 1999a, 1999b). In fact, the Delors Report recognised the financial problems of the state and the difficulties in addressing growing social needs. The decision to allocate financial resources to more restricted social groups was inevitable. However, recognising the dangers that this option involved, it was argued that these political aims should benefit from a broad democratic debate based on the evaluation of the results of the education system, results which conceivably may not have been exclusively guided by economic criteria. This discussion gave rise to the definition of processes which promoted individual participation in collective life and fos-



tered the (individual) development of the subjects. The role of the state should thus be to 'represent the community' and to be the 'mirror of a plural society' (Delors et al., 1996).

The state was no longer solely responsible for education. Alongside the special role given to the individual, partnerships with private bodies and civil society also implied less responsibility for the state. State intervention involved establishing framework educational options and ways of regulating the education system. Since education should be seen as an asset, the state could not have a monopoly of the system. For this reason, partnerships would be valued, and experiences and interventions which favoured innovations were to be stimulated. Essentially, the aim was to unleash 'new energies for education'.

**Keyword: The role of the state in LLL**

In the field of education, it is important to rise above short-term responses or reforms one after the other that risk being reversed at the next change of government. Long-term planning should be based on in-depth analysis of reality ...

These are the main justifications for the role of the state, as representative of the whole community, in a pluralistic and partnership-based society where education is a lifetime affair. That role relates mainly to the societal choices that set mark on education, but also to the regulation of the system as a whole and to promotion of the value of education; it must not, however, be exercised as a strict monopoly. It is more a matter of channelling energies, promoting initiatives and providing the conditions in which new synergies can emerge. It is also a matter of insisting on equity and the right to education requires at the very last that access to education should not be denied to certain persons or social groups; more specifically, the state should play a redistributive role, to the benefit of minorities and the underprivileged especially. Guaranteeing educational quality moreover implies the establishment of general standards and various monitoring devices

**Source:** Delors et al., 1996, p. 162

The differences between the *Faure* and the *Delors Reports* were related to what Griffin called a certain 'disenchantment with progress'. They were the result of the crisis of the welfare state, the increase in unemployment, and social inequalities. These differences justified the need for a concept of education which placed a greater emphasis on learning, for example by favouring the expression LLL. This change reflected the pressures on the state and led

the same author to argue that the social democratic model of education (in the form of LLE) was in danger, not least because the crisis of the welfare state was also the crisis of social democracy, which involved changes in the way education was understood. The state was progressively abandoning its interventionist and redistributive role; it was a coordinator of a market in which it offered certain educational services, while also promoting the commodification of others. Using regulation, no longer exclusively in line with the principles of the *democratic-emancipatory model*, or even of the *modernisation and state control model*, the state aimed to promote social justice and equal opportunities (cf. Griffin, 1999a).

For this reason, the state was no longer the only body which promoted initiatives. This was a function that was shared with individuals and with private and civil society institutions. The planning effort, which defined a policy, thus became less relevant. The *strategy* now dominated political discourses, involving the definition of procedures and processes for adopting, implementing, and assessing political options. Likewise, *autonomy* (individual and of non-state organisations) and *decentralisation* were emphasised. The intervention of several actors was supervised by the state, which was responsible for ensuring the coherence and long-term character of the policies adopted. Therefore, in spite of insisting on some aspects which alluded to a social democratic and progressivist approach to education policy, UNESCO sought to 'balance the weight of the market and the weight of the state' (Griffin 1999a, p. 334). In this light, it placed an emphasis on concerns with economic development, granting forms of education for competitiveness, such as LLL, a new-found leading position, in line with the *human resources management model*.

## **5.4 A shift in the understanding of lifelong learning: CONFINTEA V**

This same emphasis could be found in the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education - CONFINTEA V (cf. UNESCO, 1997a, 1997b). This event was marked by several aspects. The first was tied to the fact that, at the previous Conference, in Paris in 1985, the urgency of the need to recognise the right to AE was emphasised. Given the specificities of adult education, the emphasis on this right meant that a central role was accorded to education in the coming twenty-first century. As Schemmann noted, 'social and economic changes were among the reasons given for this crucial importance. In the

context of the transition to knowledge-based societies, it was argued that adult education was fundamental to both social and working life.’ (Schemmann, 2007, p. 162)

This centrality implied once again the defence of the articulation between different educational modes (formal, non-formal, and informal) within the scope of LLL. Whereas formal and non-formal education were modes that were part of public policies aimed in particular at children, young people, and, to some extent, adults, the inclusion of informal education – essentially, the acceptance that everyone could learn in very different contexts and times – emerged as something highly innovative (Knoll, 2007, p. 34ff.). As a result, since then, this mode has become part of many public policies on AE. These policies fostered the construction of mechanisms which recognised educational, training, and LLL trajectories, where the role of the individual (namely the one who learnt) was decisive.

Along these lines, UNESCO regained some aspects contained in LLE and updated the expression by valuing informal education. Adult education was now defined as follows.

**Keyword: Adult education**

Adult education denotes the entire body of ongoing learning processes, formal or otherwise, whereby people regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, and improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction to meet their own needs and those of their society. Adult learning encompasses both formal and continuing education, non-formal learning and the spectrum of informal and incidental learning available in a multicultural learning society, where theory- and practice-based approaches are recognised.

**Source:** UNESCO, 1997b, p.1

Thus there was a broadening of the understanding of AE, an acceptance of a range of perspectives (cf. Knoll, 1997) and a complexification of the problems and challenges which this field faced across the globe. This was obvious in the variety and the nature of the themes selected, which included (UNESCO, 1997b, pp. 10ff.):

- adult learning and democracy: the challenges of the twenty-first century
- improving the conditions and quality of adult learning
- ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education

- adult learning, gender equality and equity, and the empowerment of women
- adult learning and the changing world of work
- adult learning in relation to environment, health, and population
- adult learning, culture, media, and new information technologies
- adult learning for all: the rights and aspirations of different groups
- the economics of adult learning
- enhancing international co-operation and solidarity.

As in the *Delors Report*, once again there were appeals for a shift, which was justified by the dramatic changes which were taking place in the world, such as globalisation and the generalisation of processes of social exclusion. It was also explained by the enormous growth in scope and scale of these changes. They had led to the emergence of the knowledge-based society in which adult and continuing education had become an imperative in society and, specifically, in workplaces. New demands required new roles to be given to adult education, in particular that each individual should continue renewing knowledge and skills throughout life. There was a need to build 'novel and imaginative solutions'. In this context, curiously, some principles related to the *democratic-emancipatory model* were recovered. It was argued that these solutions involved seeing education as an integral part of the process of lifelong learning, of community education, of the dialogue between cultures, respect for differences, and the promotion of peace.

**Keyword: Objectives of adult education**

The objectives of youth and adult education, viewed as a lifelong process, are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities, in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society in order to face the challenges ahead. It is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on people's own heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice

Source: UNESCO, 1997b, p. 2

As a result, when it came to identifying the goals of AE some highly varied aspects were suggested. It was argued that AE should contribute to

- the struggle for social and economic development, justice, equality, respect for traditional cultures, and recognition of dignity of every human being through individual empowerment and social transformation;
- addressing human sufferings in all contexts – oppression, poverty, child labour, genocide, denial of learning opportunities based on class, gender, race or ethnicity;
- individual empowerment and social transformation. (UNESCO, 1997a, p. 14)

Regarding the state, a new role was proposed, which resembled that which would later be suggested by the European Union. This change was no doubt related to the fact that this Conference saw an increase in the number of participants, especially participants tied to civil society organisations (around one third of the roughly 1500 participants) (Knoll, 2007, p. 34). This presence influenced, on the one hand, the acceptance of the diversity of models, mechanisms, and projects for adult education, which could be found in many contexts, and, on the other, involved a larger – and, according to Lima (cf. 2010), more perverse – emphasis on the individual and learning, while at the same time suggesting other responsibilities for the state. As Knoll (2007, p. 24) put it, there was a ‘growth in the range of agencies, and a decline in State commitment’. For this reason, the significant participation of non-governmental organisations, although it was interesting and helped reflect the heterogeneity which characterised the field of AE practices, also concealed the fact that member states could be evading their political responsibility in ensuring that resolutions agreed were in fact implemented. So, although the state was still responsible for adopting a benchmark political framework and for satisfying the educational needs of all and, in particular, of the most disadvantaged social groups, individuals and partnerships took a leading role in the provision of education, as a way of compensating for the public economic and financial limitations.



#### **Text Box 14: A shift in the role of the state**

Within the new partnership emerging between the public, the private and the community sectors, the role of the state is shifting. It is not only a provider of adult education services but also an adviser, a funder, and a monitoring and evaluation agency. Governments and social partners must take the necessary measures to support individuals in expressing their educational needs and aspirations, and in gaining access to educational opportunities throughout their lives. Within governments, adult education is not confined to ministries of education; all ministries are engaged in promoting adult learning, and interministerial co-operation is essential. Moreover, employers, unions, non-governmental and community organizations, and indigenous people's and women's groups are involved and have a responsibility to interact and create opportunities for lifelong learning with provision for recognition and accreditation.

**Source:** UNESCO, 1997b, p. 30

The state should adopt a variety of roles – in particular, coordination, measurement, regulation, monitoring, and evaluation of the educational policies and provision. Unlike other proposals, where the state played a central role, as in the *democratic-emancipatory model* (regarding the interaction between the various actors and the stimulation of actions) or the *modernisation and state control model* (where that role was pivotal and dominant), in this report, the state was responsible for many tasks, though it was not clear what the available resources and possibilities would be. The state was presented simply as an important partner among other partners.

This scenario reflected the progressive continued erosion of the initial references of education, which had been witnessed in UNESCO since the 1970s. CONFITEA V sought to recover principles associated with the *democratic-emancipatory model*, while also reserving an important space for issues related to the *human resources management model*, associated with economic development. In fact there seemed to be an attempt at 'critical revisitation' (Canário, 2001b, p. 48) of the concept of LLL, when stressing the importance of different modes of education, as well as when emphasising the philosophical, political, individual, and social dimensions. This revisitation helped devolve some political character to education, through the emphasis on opportunities for social emancipation. The transformation of the processes and the strategies of social reproduction and the possibilities of a critical and transforming education – which education seemed to have lost with the growing focus on LLL – regained some importance.

In spite of UNESCO's efforts to critically revisit LLL, there was a clear increase in value given to the individual in adult education, and as a result, the word *learning* was used more frequently than *education* in the documents produced on this occasion. Completing this preference, there was a commitment to shared responsibility between the state and other actors in the provision of education, appealing to the involvement and participation of public, private, and non-governmental bodies in education. Therefore, although there were mentions of *democratic-emancipatory* forms of education, UNESCO sought to update LLE through learning. This meant that, even though the defence of several humanistic, innovative, and radical principles was maintained, there were clear concerns with *human resources management* and with economic development which bestowed a more individualised, instrumental, and market-oriented nature to AE. Although UNESCO did not agree with the views expressed by Finger & Asún (cf. 2001) that AE was at a cross-roads, this organisation did however defend the need to rebuild the field (disperse and heterogeneous, institutional and of practices) of education and adult training within a framework where it would become a priority in the context of national and international public policies.

## **5.5 A complex understanding of lifelong learning and education: CONFITEA VI**

A new critical revisitation of the concept of LLL took on a different outline at CONFITEA VI, in 2009. At this meeting, there was an effort to combine 'the right hand and the left hand of learning' in AE (cf. Lima, 2010). This event took place against the backdrop of global crisis, a 'completely different context' from the one which framed the Conference of 1997. The central role of education was emphasised once again. According to Bélanger (2010, p. 49), 'the continuing development of knowledge and skills within the adult population is one of the most strategic investments that societies today are called upon to do'. Common features between the two conferences included many of the topics discussed, as well as the large number of participants, representatives of the member-states, and civil society organisations. As a result, this Conference maintained the richness of the debates, while adding complexity to the analyses carried out and to the Final Declaration agreed on. Several regional reports, which more clearly highlighted the need to value characteristics of the three models of AE policies proposed in this study guide, made an important contribution here. However, the complex under-

standing of AE still resulted in a more critical attitude to the results desired. Aware of the ambitiousness of the goals agreed on, the participants in this Conference adopted the motto 'from words to deeds' – it was considered necessary to 'move forward'. On this point, Bélanger argued: 'Why, in the midst of an economic crisis, have some countries decided to invest in adult learning? Because they have recognised that this is an essential strategic component for emerging from crisis.' (Bélanger, 2010, p. 50)

The Conference accepted a holistic vision of LLL and AE. The goal was thus to return to principles announced in other initiatives promoted by UNESCO since its creation, in particular those which were subscribed to in the meeting in 1997. There was also an aim to reinterpret the technicist and economic-based approaches which dominated over the last twenty years, giving them humanistic and emancipatory connotations. Lastly, concerns with, for example, the preservation of the environment, the protection of women, the respect for cultural and political differences, and so on were added, and the importance given to learning and educational individualisation processes was qualified (dvv, 2010). This meeting was more balanced than the previous one, benefiting from the innovations achieved a decade earlier. It was also more ambitious, leading, for example, to recommendations that states should invest six per cent of their budgets in AE (UNESCO, 2010b) because budgets were seen as 'an expression of political will' (Bélanger, 2010, p. 55).

The document *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (GRALE) helped clarify these aspects. It started by recognising that LLL remains 'more a vision than a reality' (UNESCO, 2009, p. 14). In spite of this, the Report stated that AE was a basic universal right and should therefore be a priority for the state. Through AE, adults increased their participation in the construction of their educational trajectories and in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of societies. However, it was acknowledged that those who needed education the most were those who were systematically marginalised from achieving that right. Therefore, the low participation rates and the unequal access to educational offerings emerged as the main challenges facing AE.

The report also recognised that the world was working to recover from a severe economic crisis which had worsened social inequalities. It was in this context that ALE emerged as a priority, meriting a key role. It was considered an important contribution for addressing social, economic, political, and environmental problems. Also for this reason, it was essential to guarantee the right to education as a basic individual and social right. Unable to resolve all of the problems that societies faced, in fact education and ALE could become important keystones in learning to know, learning to do, learning to learn, and learning to be (UNESCO, 2009, p. 17).

There was an attempt to build a global and integrated interpretation of the need to promote ALE. In this effort, the emphasis was on the differences to be found in this field. On the one hand, the GRALE report highlighted the heterogeneous character of this field of practices, given that it involved a wide variety of aims, modes, forms and methods, and initiatives. This diversity was evident in the various national and regional developments of ALE. It was also clear from the commitment of the various countries to formal education and to increasing the schooling levels of their populations. Because of diversity, therefore, the weaknesses of public policies and state involvement were becoming clearer. These weaknesses were manifest in the differences contained in the legislation, in the levels of funding, in the training trajectories of adult educators, and so on. On the other hand, these differences seemed to make the incorporation of AE into LLE public policies harder, not only at a national level but also at an international level. This situation was made worse by the effects of globalisation and the scientific and technological advances which affected countries in very different ways. In this context, there was an absence of state effort in guaranteeing equal opportunities in education and social justice in many countries. This absence was particularly worrying when characterising, for example, the public provisions available. Here, the report criticised the tendency for civil society organisations, and organisations driven by profits, to organise initiatives aimed at adults, which revealed the state's disinvestment in the sector. Moreover, if the presence of civil society organisations could be seen as something positive, since it increased and expanded the educational opportunities, it also concealed a negative aspect which followed from 'the fluctuation and instability of public supports', impressing 'a high degree of sensitivity and vulnerability' on ALE policies (UNESCO, 2009, p. 56).

**Text Box 15: Retraction of the state in AE policies**

Since CONFINTEA V, up until 2009, provision in most countries has increasingly taken on the following characteristics:

- public provision was restricted to a minimum purpose at the lowest level;
- any provision beyond 'minimum' public supply was given over the private sector, commercial providers or NGOs whose provision was subject to the laws of supply and demand;
- provision thus became short-term, dispensable and contingent on the availability of resources; and
- a weakened rationale for an elaborate and stable governance structure for the provision of adult education and learning.

**Source:** UNESCO, 2009, p. 56



Countering the finding of state withdrawal, the *Millennium Development Goals* agreed on by various countries involved the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. In this perspective, the focus was once again on the articulation between broad and complex understanding of education and development. Regarding AE, the emphasis was on the individual and collective aspects, while appealing to a more effective state involvement. Formally,

the universal right to education for every child, youth and adult is the fundamental principle that underpins all our initiatives. Adult learning counts more than ever in the era of globalisation characterised by rapid change, integration and technological advances. Learning empowers adults by giving them the knowledge and skills to better their lives. But it also benefits their families, communities and societies. Adult education plays an influential role in poverty reduction, improving health and nutrition, and promoting sustainable environmental practices. As such, achieving all the Millennium Development Goals calls for good quality and relevant adult education programmes. (UNESCO, 2009, p. 8)

In this view, AE could give individuals and communities more power and ability to intervene. It could also help break the cycle of exclusion and promote a more sustainable future. It was argued that ALE required a paradigm shift towards lifelong learning for all 'as a coherent and meaningful framework for education and training provision' (p. 14). This change was justified by the complex context of globalisation and the profound inequalities which had come to light, both within states and across different states. In this context, 'adult education within a perspective of lifelong learning' should strive to preserve the diversity which had always characterised this field of practices, where different modes and activities promoted by quite different settings were brought together. At the same time, the aim was to incorporate this diversity into a conception of LLL which recovered the understandings favoured by the *Faure* and *Delors Reports*, the meanings given by the humanist and emancipatory approaches, as well as those selected by the more conservative perspectives, such as human capital.



**Keyword: Adult education and learning**

We now have a landscape of adult education and lifelong learning where mixed principles, policies and practices co-exist, with the evolution of open and flexible systems of provision capable of adapting to social and economic change. Repositioning adult education within lifelong learning therefore requires a shared philosophy of the purposes and benefits of adult learning. Global complexity calls for the contribution of both instrumental and empowering rationales for adult education. In recent years, it is the former that have become more prominent, with human capital approaches shaping policies more strictly than in the past. In contrast, the original vision of adult education as contributing to political empowerment and societal transformation has receded: it is rarely considered in policy-making. ... Today's case for adult education must begin from the view that it is precisely these values and principles of empowerment that need to be put at the centre.

Source: UNESCO, 2009, p. 23

In line with this, the *Belém Framework for Action* established a comprehensive and complex vision of ALE, focused on addressing global issues and challenges. This vision returned to ideas contained in the reports mentioned, emphasising (lifelong) education, as long as it was set within a *continuum*. Aside from boosting the importance of literacy and basic education for all, in order to promote the participation of all in different areas of social life – core principles in the *modernisation and state control* and *democratic-emancipatory models* – it was argued that policies and legislative measures should have a comprehensive and inclusive character, which was part of the lifelong and lifewide perspective. These policies and measures should be based on sector-wide and inter-sectoral approaches, covering and linking all components of learning and education. This pattern stressed the importance of governance, which should be effective, transparent, accountable, and equitable, reinforcing the responsiveness of all stakeholders for the needs of learners and, in particular, the most disadvantaged ones. The same standards were applied to funding, where it was argued that a significant financial investment was essential to ensure the quality of ALE provision. Inclusive education was also considered central to the achievement of human, social, and economic development. As well in what concerned the quality in learning and education, it was stated that it should be a holistic, multidimensional concept, and that practice required constant attention and continuous development (cf. UNESCO, 2010b, pp. 38ff.).

Once again, there was an appeal for state involvement in adult education, now under new moulds, for example through policies which combined principles related to the welfare state with equal opportunities and social justice, the individualisation and the collective character of education, with the weaknesses of the state at a time of cutbacks in the social and educational arenas. In this view, Bélanger stated that

if the need for education throughout life is increasingly convergent, it is also because it has become an essential tool for development of our societies, a society which cannot remain without a reflective state of continuous awakening of civil society, a society where the welfare of the state cannot be maintained without becoming participatory. (Bélanger, 2010, p. 52)

The concern with recovering one of the leading ideas of the welfare state with regard to AE encompassed a defence of education and learning as a right for all, because as Bélanger pointed out (2010, p. 52), ‘adult basic education remains ... “tragically underfunded”’. Thus the principles related to the *modernisation and state control model* were restored. But, once again, the idea that education and learning could provide better life conditions for individuals – conditions related either to individual or social, political, economic, environmental, and civic dimensions – was strengthened (cf. UNESCO, 2010b, pp. 33ff.). Therefore, even if there were no explicit references to the role of the state in LLL, it seemed clear that UNESCO was committed to a strong involvement of the state in defining policies (and not strategies) with aims related to the defence of democracy, social justice, and equal opportunities; in adopting comprehensive long-term policies; and in promoting multisectoral approaches of social and educational inclusion. Now, although it was not clearly stated that these tasks were the responsibility of the state, in fact no other organisation would be able to effectively achieve this task ‘of making civil organisations do things’ and ‘of doing with these organisations’ (UNESCO, 2010b, p. 33).

## 5.6 Synthesis

UNESCO played a crucial role in the international debate on AE. Through the ties between education and development, as well as the promotion of concepts such as lifelong education and/or learning, this organisation fostered convergence in education policy, generating a widespread consensus in this idea. Educational monitoring and reporting, supported by several indicators that showed the results achieved by each country, could be seen as a good ex-

ample of this effort of convergence (cf. Schemmann, 2007). Later on, these tasks supported the making of a new educational order (cf. Antunes, 2008; Field, 2006), promoted by some states more than by others.

In this wide agreement between states, international and supranational organisations, lifelong education and/or learning has played a crucial role. This role has, on the one hand, influenced the political and social recognition of AE as a field of reflection and of practice in each country. On the other hand, this role was more or less reflected in national policies by influencing changes in education systems towards a comprehensive modernisation (cf. Field, 2006; Schemmann, 2007), as happened by trying to promote the inclusion of different modes of education (formal, non-formal, and informal).

The existence of international agendas was also evident in the impact that the chosen topics had. Even if certain themes were not particularly relevant in some countries, the fact that they were mentioned, for example in the Final Declarations of the International Conferences, granted them legitimacy and status. In some way, this choice forced the existence of similarities in terms of problems and needs included in national policies. In this way a 'global structured agenda' (cf. Dale, 2001) and a 'world polity culture' (cf. Schemmann, 2007) were fostered.

By complementing the building of global agendas since the first conferences and, in particular, since the 1970s, UNESCO's involvement reflected a shift. This shift was clear in the different meanings given to the relationship between education and development, for example in the dropping of the expression LLE in favour of LLL. This change was accompanied by a devaluing of radical and emancipatory approaches – that is, alternative visions in which AE had a long-term social purpose. It was also a shift which reflected changes in state intervention, from an interventionist to a facilitating role, from 'policy to strategy' (cf. Griffin, 1999a). These changes revealed the rejection of principles related to the *democratic-emancipatory model* and the *modernisation and state control model*, in favour of others consistent with the *human resources management model*. The adoption of active policies for social inclusion, where vocational training and the appeal to 'rights associated with duties' by adults became an imperative, was a clear example of this aspect. Supported by the individualisation of education, this shift was combined with a global policy consensus, hostile to more critical perspectives of education, where policy clearly gave way to short- or medium-term intervention programmes, with limited and not very novel objectives (cf. Field, 2001, 2006).

In this shift, AE – in particular, the AE that was closer to social, employment, and work problems – gained social legitimacy and a priority role in public policies (cf. Sanz Fernández, 2008). As Bélanger and Federighi (cf.

2000) argued, several factors helped make AE a political priority. The first factor was related to a centrifuge movement which mirrored the increase in adult participation in formal and non-formal education activities. This increase covered a wide range of initiatives, from literacy to teaching, vocational training, civic and environmental education, long-distance education, and so on. Informal education, in turn, was valued, as learning based on significant experiences was recognised and legitimised, as happened with the provision of education centred on the recognition of knowledge acquired through experience. Another aspect was tied to the fact that AE policies had spilled out of the educational realm into the social realm, in particular areas related to work and employment. Here, the contribution of training for the development of public policies grew. The usefulness granted to informal education and the recognition of knowledge acquired throughout life, which in the meantime became part of the public provision in many countries, also played an important role here. A third aspect was related to the importance given to adults, as actors in their education and training biographies, to the rediscovery of their empowerment in the productive and economic processes, and to the increase in the demand for education and training by individuals against a backdrop of structural unemployment, as a way of re-entering the job market. In relation to this, the same authors argued that

in the new adult education policies everything goes on regarding the different forms of economic production: supporting the growth in investment in this field, creating spaces which allow broader definitions of social demand to manifest themselves, correcting inequalities, recognising the advances and innovations in relation to the objectives chosen and fostering the development of synergies related to the abilities to act, both in organisations and in individuals. (Bélanger & Federighi, 2000, p. 267-268, own translation)

A fourth aspect was related to access and equal opportunities in AE. As Sanz Fernández (cf. 2008) pointed out, over the last few decades, there has been an increase in the processes of social and educational dualisation, which resulted in the creation of two groups: a first group that included those who knew the most, who wanted to know the most, and who could know the most; and a second one that included the group of individuals who had had the least educational opportunities, who wanted to know the least, and who could know the least. In light of this, several public policies included measures aimed at overcoming the structural and institutional obstacles affecting adult participation. Apart from the increase in provision, new models were adopted which aimed to encompass anyone who wanted to learn, and to motivate many more to learn. In this context, the state assumed a decisive role, even though it may no longer have been central or dominant, as happened in the *democratic-emancipatory model* or the *modernisation and state control model*. This role



was complemented by the policies' international/supranational dimension, as well as by the varied character of the measures adopted, which since then had been more diverse in terms of contents, mechanisms, pedagogical methods, and participants (Bélanger & Federighi, 2000, pp. 271ff.).

In spite of this and the fact that CONFINTEA V and VI had highlighted various concerns with the recovery of principles associated with the *democratic-emancipatory model*, with the diversity and heterogeneity of the field, as well as with education as a social right, many nuances in the articulation between education and development lost their relevance. This loss reflected changes in the political and cultural context, where public policies influenced by lifelong education and/or learning were developed (Field, 2001, pp. 12ff.). The preference for partnerships was one such change. In fact, UNESCO had been framing the thesis that responsibility for lifelong education and/or learning was a state affair, although it became clear that it was also an affair for many other actors (such as non-governmental organisations, work organisations, etc.). CONFINTEA V (cf. UNESCO, 1997a, 1997b) showed this large engagement of different actors in the development of LLL. This emphasis was maintained in CONFINTEA VI (cf. UNESCO, 2010b). However, in spite of the governmental interest in this involvement in many countries, this tendency resulted in a retraction of the state in the field of AE and, as a result, in an increase in the responsibilities of individuals and other entities – especially private or civil society organisations – in the provision of education.

These changes were combined with greater concerns with monitoring, controlling, and evaluating policies. Accountability emerged as an inevitable topic in a context where the state went from being a promoter to being a coordinator of activities. The themes contained in the final declarations made this aspect clear. Here, the importance of collecting information based on indicators, assessing results, and exchanging information with other states was emphasised. Even if, as Bélanger (cf. 2010) noted, it was deemed essential to know the context and the potential results of the practices in order to change and adapt the public policies to the needs and problems felt by adults, in reality this process also involved the adaptation of countries to significant isomorphic and convergence trends, where the retraction of the state from an important social arena was clear.

In this perspective, the evolution of UNESCO's approach to education, development, and lifelong education and/or learning showed that many emphases had changed, but that there was still much more to be done to achieve a critical and dialogic adult education (cf. Sanz Fernández, 2008), a meaningful education, and learning in which the 'right hand' could be linked to the 'left hand' (cf. Lima, 2007) to achieve an ambidextrous education. In fact,



meaningful learning and education would have to be based on people's needs, cultures, contexts, and social relations. It would imply learning as a process of critical awareness and education for/as a practice of freedom. It should comprise all sorts of learning and education contents, forms and methods, but strongly avoid mere processes of adjustment, subordination, and alienation, or simply instrumental tools for adaptation to the world, without engagement, denying the capacity for active and democratic citizenship. It would have to be related to individual and social improvement, political awareness, mobilisation for decent work, decent environment, decent life, and decent learning and education. Within this framework, the articulation between education and development would benefit from a wide understanding and from the acceptance of the diversity of the field of AE. Furthermore, the individual, the state, as well as private and non-governmental organisations could foster a critical, emancipatory, and democratic education.

## Exercises and tasks

### *Exercise 1*

In the 1970s, UNESCO put forward a humanistic vision based on the concepts of the *learning society* and 'permanent education'. According to Freire, permanent education, upheld and disseminated across the world by UNESCO, was justified as an educational process for humanisation:

Education is permanent not because it is required by a given ideological approach or political position or economic interest. Education is permanent because of, on the one hand, the finitude of human beings, and on the other, the awareness humans have of their own finitude. Even more so because, throughout history, human nature incorporated both *knowing what it was experiencing* and *knowing what it knew* and therefore knowing that it could know more. This is where the foundations of permanent education and training lie. (Freire, 1993, p. 20, own translation)

Write a short essay (1-2 pages) on the relationship between the definition of permanent education or lifelong education presented by Freire, and the idea of an adult education for development, democracy, emancipation, liberation, and empowerment defended by UNESCO in the 1970s, in particular in the *Learning to Be* report (cf. Faure et al., 1972).

### Task 1

Based on the references made to the *Faure Report* (1972) and the *Delors Report* (1996) throughout this chapter,

- a) list the differences between them in terms of their main objectives and the core concepts used
- b) compare the role given to the state, the market, civil society, and the individual in each of the reports
- c) try to interpret the main differences you found between these two documents in light of the political, economic, and cultural contexts in which they were produced.

### Task 2

Read the *Hamburg Declaration* and the *Agenda for the Future*, approved in 1997 by CONFINTEA V

(<http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/pdf/con5eng.pdf>).

- a) Summarise the main objectives listed and the main concepts used in the text.
- b) In light of the three analytical models studied in Chapter 3, critically interpret the leading role and meanings given to the concept of *lifelong learning*.
- c) Compare the role given to the state with the role given to other institutional actors and individual learners.
- d) Try to find similarities and differences between these documents and the principles and concepts presented in the *Delors Report*.
- e) Identify the main similarities you found in the documents of CONFINTEA V and the documents you read in connection with the European Union's LLL strategies.

### Task 3

Read the *Belém Framework for Action*, approved by CONFINTEA VI, which took place in 2009

([http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UII/confintea/pdf/working\\_documents/Belém%20Framework\\_Final.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UII/confintea/pdf/working_documents/Belém%20Framework_Final.pdf)).

- a) Identify the main differences between this text and the documents connected to CONFINTEA V.
- b) Identify the possible indicators present in the text approved in 2009 which may justify the conclusions presented in this chapter regarding the revitalisation and democratisation of the role of the welfare state and the reappraisal of the relationships between education, development, and political empowerment.
- c) Provide examples of dimensions which may confirm the presence of both instrumental and empowering rationales.

#### *Task 4*

##### **Working Group**

1. Read the summary of the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (UNESCO, 2009)  
[http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UII/confintea/pdf/GRALE/confinteavi\\_grale\\_executive-summary\\_en.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UII/confintea/pdf/GRALE/confinteavi_grale_executive-summary_en.pdf),  
 and read the National Report that your country submitted to CONFINTEA VI  
<http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/national-reports>.
2. Through a comparative analysis:
  - a) Identify the main similarities and differences regarding the state of the art of ALE which is presented in both documents and try to interpret them in light of the concepts discussed in this study guide.
  - b) In both reports, identify dimensions which might better be interpreted in the light of each of the three analytical models of ALE policies studied in Chapter 3.
3. Carefully analyse the National Report presented by the public authorities of your country, describing and analysing:
  - a) the definition of ALE as a field of policies and a field of practices
  - b) the role given to the state and other institutional actors
  - c) the priority given to public policies and ALE strategies
  - d) the main policy concepts used in the text
  - e) the main influences of the ALE strategies proposed by the European Union and/or other transnational actors
  - f) the main identity traits of this history, pedagogical thinking, and educational achievements which may be considered specific to your country.

## 6. Final Remarks

The concepts of *LLE* and the *learning society* initially related to a society notable for the availability of free time, evolving into a society characterised by an excess of labour. It was not a defence of perpetual training or never-ending learning, guided by the acquisition of technical qualifications or competencies and economically valuable skills with a view to creating a flexible worker.

In 1968, in *The Learning Society*, a concept which was not recently coined by the European Union, as some sectors believe, Hutchins declared that the target of education could not be labour when society's problem lay in an excess of it (cf. Hutchins, 1970, p. 124). The 'learning society' that he proposed was based on two facts he believed were unavoidable: the growing proportion of free time and the speed of social change (p. 130). With work no longer representing the main objective in life, education and learning would no longer be considered preparation for work, and instead their core purpose would be 'learning to be civilized, learning to be human' (p. 134). A few years ago, in an essay written for UNESCO about the seven lessons in education of the future, Morin (cf. 2002) adopted identical objectives by defending the need to 'educate for human understanding' and 'teach the human condition', although apparently this still failed to persuade the institutions and governments of Europe.

Lengrand too, in his classic *An Introduction to Lifelong Education*, published in 1970 by UNESCO, started from a similar diagnosis, drawing attention to the quickening pace of social change and the importance of free time, which, through the development of *permanent education*, would pave the way for an 'educational society' (cf. Lengrand, 1981, pp. 107ff., own translation), making education, in his words, 'a life tool, nourished by the contribution of life, which prepared men to successfully face the tasks and responsibilities of their existence' (Lengrand, 1981, p. 82, own translation).

As we have seen in this study guide, the last few decades have witnessed a complex process of change, both conceptual and in terms of political orien-

tation, occasionally weakening the more democratic and emancipatory origin of the LLE ideals and preferring to emphasise the adaptive and functional capacities reflected in the defence of LLL in relation to each individual. In the words of the Portuguese economist Murteira, the new worker 'would be like a sort of *lonely cowboy*, the typical hero in North American westerns, now letting his learning ride in a broad space of knowledge where he is less protected, but also freer and at the mercy of his own initiative' (Murteira, 2007, p. 58, own translation).

The erosion of the concept of education in favour of the concept of learning, clearly expressed in the EU policy documents and, in a way, also induced by the *Declaration of Hamburg* of 1997, had a perverse – or unwanted – effect, in certain political contexts: an insular advocacy of the concept of learning. In seeking to adapt perfectly to the social structure, economic competitiveness, and the search for employability, public policies to foster LLL involved a radical transition from the concept of education to the concept of learning, giving the latter a clearly individualist and pragmatist connotation. Even UNESCO has acknowledged this sort of unwanted effect, particularly noticeable in certain post-CONFINTEA V (Hamburg, 1997) public policies. These policies help to remove the state's responsibility for defining global and integrated policies, and for funding and providing a sufficiently accessible and diverse public network. They help foster the growing role of the market, which is expected to provide the educational answers for many citizens, regardless of their lack of resources as clients or consumers.

The apparent advantage was the strengthening of the concern with individuals and their effective learning, given that, as is well known, public provision of education has often proved to be incapable of guaranteeing democratic policies for equal opportunities and of establishing education of young people and adults as a fundamental human right. Historically, the welfare state also proved to be less democratic and egalitarian than what had been promised by the social democratic policies. However, the change in political discourses from LLE to LLL was, as various documents in preparation for CONFINTEA VI acknowledged, used to justify the shift of the state's obligations to the market and to each individual, viewing education more as the provision of a marketable service than as a public good. In several cases, it was a matter of making each individual responsible for their 'learning biography' or 'portfolio of competencies', according to the fashionable language, essentially reinforcing the trends seen in other social fields for processes of individualisation and a decrease in the state's obligations.

For various authors mentioned in this book, a conception of LLE or education throughout life capable of preserving its attributes as a critical diagno-



sis of the social world, of an understanding of the obstacles to its transformation, of imagining possibilities for its change and resulting educational and cultural action, must humbly acknowledge the disproportion between the greatness of its goals and the limits of its means and capacities. This does not mean that, by accepting that education does not do everything and that learning cannot do everything, one must accept its mechanical subordination to the rule of economics, today symbolised by the *human resources management model* of LLL. Especially since this subordination has been justified based on a new sort of pedagogism, of economic and managerial extraction, based on the advantages of an adaptive and functional learning for which, in many cases, we may be normatively forced to deny the epithet of educational experience.

This justifies the extreme importance of the critique of the virtually totalitarian 'pedagogisation' of the individual and collective spheres, based on the belief that our greatest problems are due to the crisis of education and the school, and that only through a new paradigm of learning, which focuses on making the individual accountable and which atomises the individual, can we finally answer to the 'challenges' of globalisation and of the 'information and knowledge-based society'.

The return to the virtues of education and learning in the new capitalism, apparently through new arguments, often is simply a re-updating of the perspectives of 'human capital': deterministic relations between ALE, productivity, and economic modernisation; functionalist rationale, centred on combating anomie, imbalances, and social struggles; subservience of ALE and individual learning to the economy; subordination of ALE to objectives which are totally, or almost totally, defined a priori, and to measurable and rankable 'learning outcomes'; imposition, sometimes at a transnational level, of reference frameworks and detailed lists of competencies and skills which must be acquired. A reasonable share of European LLL strategies, in particular many which today are put forward in important policy documents produced by the European Union, refer less to the European social democracy tradition and the role of provision, *modernisation and control by the welfare state*, and more to a model of reform of the welfare state, often inspired by neo-liberal ideals and centred on a *human resource management* rationale.

In all its diversity, given its multiform nature, ALE is not driven to ignore, irresponsibly, the problems of the economy and society, of work and employment. But its humanistic project would struggle to resist the adoption of a position of subordination, bent by the force of economic competitiveness, being transformed into more or less restricted programmes of human resources training and qualification of the labour force.

ALE is no doubt also a question of economy. But it is much more than that; it is a social and cultural policy issue, as UNESCO has argued over the last few decades. It is, also, an issue of pedagogy that is much more complex than the simple mottos of competitiveness, employability, adaptability, and entrepreneurialism.

A democratic and non-one-dimensional education, understood as a human right even more than as an equal opportunity, which seeks to guarantee the mobilisation of pedagogical subjects for the exercise of critical thought, will no doubt be aware of its strengths and limitations. In any case, it represents an unavoidable contribution to the *democratisation of democracy* and the intensifying of justice between human beings, in line with an important *democratic-emancipatory* tradition of AE which, according to several authors and institutional actors, we must urgently recover and reinvent.

In this humanistic and democratic frame of reference, the capacity to critically interpret a hybrid and complex reality like the one we inhabit, to understand the European ALE strategies and the sundry rationales, the institutional actors (at a national and transnational level), the agendas and interests of hybrid political orientations, is vital – whether it is in terms of academic study and understanding or in terms of educational debate and professional and citizenship options.

This is what we hope may result from reading this study guide and from each student's personal appropriation of it through their view of the world, their experiences, and their personal choices as citizens.

# List of Abbreviations

AE:	Adult Education
ALE:	Adult Learning and Education
CONFINTEA:	International Conference of Adult Education
EEC:	European Economic Community
EQF:	European Qualifications Framework
EU:	European Union
GRALE:	Global Report on Adult Learning and Education
ICAE:	International Council for Adult Education
LLE:	Lifelong Education
LLL:	Lifelong Learning
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VET:	Vocational Education and Training

## Annotated Bibliography

Bélanger, P., & Federighi, P. (2000). *Analyse transnationale des politiques d'éducation et de formation des adultes: La libération difficile des forces créatrices*. Hamburg/Paris: UNESCO/L'Harmattan.

The authors discuss the silent explosion in ALE that can be seen in the increased supply and social demand worldwide. Taking over a hundred reports on public policies in the UNESCO member states as their basis, they seek to typify the processes involved in drawing up public policies, and to identify their functions and the stresses between the supply of and demand for ALE. Moreover, they set out to examine the continuities and discontinuities that can be found in such policies with respect, for example, to the roles of the state, the market, and civil society. They end by calling attention to the need to rebuild the field of ALE, taking into account the intervention of the various institutional actors and of individuals, the focus on access to education and on equal opportunity, and the new forms of organisation and administration. They note that times are uncertain and that ALE is facing a number of challenges.

Dale, R. (2009). Contexts, constraints and resources in the development of European education space and European education policy. In R. Dale & S. Robertson (Eds.), *Globalisation & Europeanisation in education* (pp. 23–43). Oxford: Symposium Books.

The author suggests that the globalisation and Europeanisation of public policies for education are complementary and central dimensions of the building of Europe as a political space. The dimensions are referred to two sides of a triangle (complemented by competition) that influences the priorities and policies adopted. In fact, lifelong learning is constitutive of an economic project as well as part of a larger political programme. The author argues that even if it cannot be assumed as a scaled-up version of national policies, lifelong learning orientations that have emerged from the Lisbon agenda and from further policy documents are central pillars of an economic programme that aims at achieving an ambitious European political project.

Field, J. (2006). *Lifelong learning and the educational order*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham.

This book addresses the meaning of lifelong learning in the public policies of various countries, particularly in EU policy documents and other international organisations such as the OECD and UNESCO. It confirms the innovative nature of the priority given to lifelong learning, associated with the silent explosion in adult participation in highly diverse formal and non-formal ALE initiatives, and the emphasis placed on informal education. The author says that, in public policies, much of what is learned is appreciated in terms of its usefulness for economic development. He argues that, in a complex context, lifelong learning is a mechanism for exclusion and control. He finishes by asserting that investment in lifelong learning is at the basis of the construction of a new educational order which contains serious inequalities.

Griffin, C. (1999a). Lifelong learning and social democracy. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 18(5), 329–342.

Griffin, C. (1999b). Lifelong learning and welfare reform. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 18(6), 431–452.

In these two articles, the author analyses two approaches to lifelong learning (social democratic policy and welfare reform) which, in the political debate, have been referenced without discrimination and even taken as being the same. However, Griffin argues that these two approaches embody different understandings, because one is the outcome of social democratic policies that can be ascribed to the welfare state whereas the other seeks *welfare reform*. He indicates another approach, too, one that is closer to the positions adopted by UNESCO – the *progressive social democratic approach* to education, which has critical, radical characteristics. He says that these approaches involve different meanings of education and learning, and assign distinct roles to the state, with a more political connotation to its intervention in the case of the social democratic and socio-critical, or more strategic, in the welfare reform approach. Focusing on the differences between the meanings of education and learning and the role of the state, Griffin concludes by stressing the reductive nature of lifelong learning and the dangers associated with public policies inspired by neo-liberalism.

Lima, L. C. (2003). Adult education as social policy: Reforming and post-reforming strategies in Portugal. In S. Schmidt-Lauff (Ed.), *Adult education and lifelong learning: A European view as perceived by participants in an exchange programme* (pp. 133–144). Hamburg: Kovac.

Lima, L. C. (2008). A educação de adultos em Portugal (1974–2004). In R. Canário & B. Cabrito (Eds.), *Educação e formação de adultos: Mutações e convergências* (pp. 31–60). Lisbon: Educa.

Following a chronological line, the author discusses public policies on adult education in Portugal from 1974 (the year of the democratic revolution) until 2004, a time when the education policies were largely influenced by the guidelines proposed by the



European Union under the Lisbon Strategy. He uses three political-educational rationales: the *democratic, emancipatory and autonomous model*; the *social control model*; and the *economic modernisation, labour-force and human resources management model*. Lima says that the democratic, emancipatory, and autonomous models had some impact on adult education policies just after the restoration of democracy. These have meanwhile been banished by social control models that see adult education as a second chance, and more recently by human resources management models that focus on the vocational training of adults with little schooling, with economic development and increased competitiveness in mind. He concludes by emphasising the need to adopt global, integrated policies that will meet the specificities of Portugal's education situation and help further democracy and social participation.

Sanz Fernández, F. (2008). Modelos actuais de educação de pessoas adultas. In R. Canário & B. Cabrito (Eds.), *Educação e formação de adultos: Mutações e convergências* (pp. 73–96). Lisbon: Educa.

Sanz Fernández, F. (2006). *As raízes históricas dos modelos actuais de educação de pessoas adultas*. Lisbon: Educa/Unidade de I&D de Ciências da Educação.

Taking a historical approach, the author provides a structured reflection on adult education and the modes of intervening in this field. In addition, he sets out three analytical models for adult education: the *literacy model*, the *social dialogue model*, and the *productive economic model*. Examining the differences between them, Sanz Fernández challenges the exclusive preference for each model in the history of adult education policies. He argues for the complementarity of separate models so as to give adult education the space it needs in social, economic, and political development.

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## *Links*

Consejo de Educación de Adultos de América Latina (CEAAL)

<http://www.ceaal.org>

European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

<http://www.eaea.org>

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu>

European Union (EU)

<http://europa.eu>

German Institute for Adult Education (Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung – DIE)

<http://www.die.bonn.de>

Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbandes (dvv international):

<http://www.iz-dvv.de>

International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)

<http://www.icae.org.uy>

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)

<http://www.niace.org.uk>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

<http://www.oecd.org>

The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet)

<http://www.folkbildning.se>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

<http://www.unesco.org>

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

<http://www.uil.unesco.org>

EU Reports on LLL:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy>

UNESCO Reports of CONFINTEA VI

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/resources/publications>

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